XXVII.

SERMONS

PREACHED AT

Golden Grove;

Being for the Summer Half-year,

BEGINNING ON WHITSUNDAY

And ending on the xxvth Sunday after

TRINITY.

By FER. TAYLOR,

Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles the First, and late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor.

The Fourth Edition Corrected.

LONDON,

Printed for R. Royston, Bookseller to the King's most Excellent Majesty. 1673.

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By FE TITLOR

Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles in First, and late Lord Bishop of Darwand Cangr.

The Fourth Edition Corollar.

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Printed for 26 Royles, Bookfoller to the King's mod Harcell at Majell at 1673.



To the right Honourable and truly Noble R 12 CHARD Lord VAUGHAN, Earl of Carbery, Baron of Emlin and Molingar, Knight of the Honourable Order of the Bath.

My Lord,

Now present to your Lordship a Copy of those Sermons, the publication of which was first designed by the appetites of that hunger and thirst of Righteousness, which made your Dear Lady (that rare Soul) so dear to God, that be was pleased speedily to satisfie ber, by carrying ber from our shallow and impure Cifterns, to drink out of the fountains of our Saviour. My Lord, I shall but prick your tender eye, if I shall re-mind your Lordship bow diligent a bearer, how careful a recorder, how prudent an observer, bow sedulous a practifer of Holy Discourses she was; and that therefore it was, that what did slide through her ear, the was desirous to place before her eye, that by those windows they might enter in, and dwell in her heart: But because by this truth I shall do advantage to the following Discourses, give me leave (my Lord) to fancy that this Book is derived upon your Lordship almost in the nature of a Legacy from her, whose every thing was dearer to your Lordship than your own eyes; and that what she was pleased to believe apt to minister to her Devotions, and the Religions of her pious and differning Soul, may also be allowed

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allowed a place in your Closet, and a portion of your retirement, and a lodging in your thoughts, that they may incourage and instruct your practice, and promote that interest which is, and ought to be, dearer to you than all those blessings and separations with which God hath re-

marked your Family and Person.

My Lord, I confess the Publication of these Sermons can so little serve the ends of my Reputation, that I am therefore pleased the rather to do it, because I cannot at all be tempted, in so doing, to minister to any thing of vanity. Sermons may please when they first strike the ear, and yet appear flat and ignorant when they are offered to the eye, and to an understanding that can consider I remember that a young Gentleman of at leisure. Athens, being to answer for his life, bired an Orator to make his Defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading, but when the young man by often reading it, that he might recite it publickly by heart, began to grow weary and displeased with it, the Orator bade him consider that the Judges and the people were to hear it but once, and then it was likely they at that first instant might be as well pleased as he. This bath often represented to my mind the condition and fortune of Sermons, and that Isnow part with the advantage they had in their delivery; but I have sufficiently answered my self in that, and am at rest perfectly in my thoughts as to that particular, if I can in any degree serve the interest of Souls, and (which is next to that) obey the Piety, and record the memory of that dear Saint, whose Name and whose Soul is blef fed: for in both thefe ministeries I doubt not but your Lordship will be pleased, and account as if I had done also some service to your self: Your Religion makes me sure of the first, and your Piety puts the latter past my fears. However, I suppose, in the whole account of this affair, this Publication may be esteemed but like Preaching to a numerous

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numerous Auditory; which if I had done, it would have been called either Duty or Charity, and therefore will not now foreadily be cenfured for vanity, if I make use of all the wayes I can to minister to the good of Souls. But because my intentions are fair in themselves, and I hope are acceptable to God, and will be fairly expounded by your Lordship, (whom for so great reason I so much value) I shall not trouble you or the world with an Apology for this so free publishing my weaknesses: I can better secure my reputation, by telling men how they ought to entertain Sermons; for if they that read or hear do their duty as right, the Preacher shall soon be secured of his fame, and

untouched by censure.

1. For it were well if men would not inquire after the Learning of the Sermon, or its deliciousness to the ear or fancy, but observe its Usefulnes; not what concerns the Preacher, but what concerns themselves; not what may make a vain reflexion upon him, but what may substantially Serve their own needs; that the attending to his discourses may not be spent in vain talk concerning him or his disparagements, but may be used as a duty and a part of Religion, to minister to edification and instruction. When S. John reckoned the principles of evil actions, he told but of three, The Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life. But there was then also in the world (and now it is grown into age, and strength, and faction) another Lust, the Lust of the Ear, and a fifth also, the Lust of the Tongue. Some people have an insatiable appetite in hearing; and hear only that they may hear, and talk, and make a party: They enter into their neighbour's bouse to kindle their candle, and espying there a glaring fire, sit down upon the hearth, and warm themselves all day, and forget their errand; and in the mean time their own fires are not lighted, nor their families instructed or provided for, nor

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any need ferred, but a lazy pleasure, which is useless and impudent. Hearing or reading Sermons, is, or ought to be, in order to practice; for so God intended it, that Faith should come by Hearing, and that Charity should come by Faith, and by both together we may be faved: For a man's ears (as Plutarch calls them) are virtutum ansa, by them we are to hold and apprehend Vertue : and unless we use them as men do veffels of dishonour, filling them with things fit to be thrown away, with any thing that is not necessary, we are by them more nearly brought to God than by all the senses beside. For although things placed before the eye affect the mind more readily than the things we usually hear; yet the reason of that is, because we hear carelessy, and we hear variety: the same species dwells upon the eye, and represents the same object in union and single representment; but the objects of the ear are broken into fragments of periods, and words, and fyllables, and must be attended with a careful understanding: and because every thing diverts the sound, and every thing calls off the understanding, and the spirit of a man is truantly and trifling; therefore it is, that what men bear does so little affect them, and so weakly work toward the purposes of vertue: and yet nothing does fo affect the mind of man as those voices to which we cannot chuse but attend; and thunder and all loud voices from Heaven rend the most stony beart, and make the most obstinate pay to God the homage of trembling and fear; and the still voice of God usually takes the tribute of love, and choice, and obedience. Now fince Hearing is so affective an instrument of conveying impresses and images of things, and exciting purposes, and fixing resolutions, (unless we hear weakly and impersect-ly;) it will be of the greater concernment that we be curious to bear in order to such purposes which are perfe-Hive of the Soul and of the Spirit, and not to dwell in fancy

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fancy and speculation, in pleasures and tristing arrests, which continue the Soul in its infancy and childhood, ne ver letting it go forth into the misdom and vertues of a man. I have read concerning Dionysius of Sicily, that being delighted extremely with a Minstrel that sung well, and struck bis Harp dexterously, be promised to give him a great reward; and that raised the fancy of the man, and made him play better. But when the Muhek was done, and the man waited for his great bope, the King dismissed him empty, telling him, that he should carry away as much of the promised reward as bimself did of the Musich, and that he had payed him sufficiently with the pleasure of the Promise for the pleasure of the Song: both their ears had been equally delighted, and the profit just none at all. So it is in many mens bearing Sermons: they admire the Preacher, and he pleafes their ears, and neither of them both bear along with them any good; and the Hearer bath as little good by the Sermon, as the Preacher by the air of the peoples breath, when they make a noise, and admire, and understand not. And that also is a second Caution I desire all men would take.

2. That they may never trouble the affairs of Preaching and Hearing respectively, with admiring the person of any man. To admire a Preacher is such a remard of his pains and worth, as if you should crown a Conquerour with a garland of Roses, or a Bride with Laurel; it is an undecency, it is no part of the remard which could be intended for him. For though it he a good-natured folly, yet it hath in it much danger: For by that means the Preacher may lead his Hearers captive, and make them servants of a Fastion, or of a Lust; it makes them so much the less to be servants of Christ, by how much they call any man Master upon earth; it weakens the heart and hands of others; it places themselves in a rank

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rank much below their proper station, changing from bearing the Word of God, to admiration of the persons and faces of men; and it being a fault that falls upon the more easie natures and foster understandings, does more easily abuse a man. And though such a person may have the good fortune to admire a good man and a wife; yet it is an ill disposition, and makes him liable to every mans abuse. Stupidum hominem quavis oratione percelli, Said Heraclitus; An undiscerning person is apt to be cozened by every oration. And besides this, That Pread cher whom some do admire, others will most certainly envy : and that also is to be provided against with diligence : and you must not admire too forwardly, for your own fake, lest you fall into the hands of a worse Preacher; and for his fake, whom when you admire, you also love, for others will be apt to envy him.

3. But that must by all men be avoided, for Enry is the worst counsellour in the world, and the worst hearer of a wife discourse. I pity those men who live upon flattery and wonder, and while they fit at the foot of the Do-Etors chair, stare in his face, and cry axeles, & μεγάλυ φιλοσόφυ! rarely spoken, admirably done! They are like callow and unfeathered birds, gaping perpetually to be fed from another's mouth, and they never come to the knowledge of the truth; such a knowledge as is effective, and expressed in a prudent and holy life. But those men that envy the Preacher, besides that they are great enemies of the Holy Ghost, and are spitefully evil, because God is good to him, they are also enemies to themselves. that envies the honours or the riches of another, envies for his own sake, and he would fain be rich with that wealth which sweats in his neighbour's coffers: but he that envies him that makes good Sermons, envies himself, and is angry because himself may receive the

the benefit, and be improved, or delighted, or instructed by another. He that is apt fondly to admire any man's person must cure himself by considering, That the Preacher is God's minister and servant; That he speaks God's Word, and does it by the Divine affiftance; That he hath nothing of his own but sin and imperfection; That he does but his duty, and that also hardly enough; That he is highly answerable for his talent; and stands deeply charged with the cure of Souls; and therefore That he is to be highly esteemed for the works sake, not for the person: his industry and his charity is to be beloved, his ability is to be accounted upon another stock, and for it the Preacher and the Hearer are both to give God thanks; but nothing is due to the man for that, save only that it is the rather to be imployed, because by it we may better be instructed: But if any other reflection be made upon his person, it is next to the fin and danger of Herod and the people, when the fine Oration was made usta wollis queraolas, with huge fancy; the people were pleased, and Herod was admired, and God was angry, and an Angel was sent to strike him with death and with dishonour. But the envy against a Preacher is to be cured by a contrary discourse, and we must remember, That be is in the place of God, and hath received the gift of God, and the aids of the Holy Ghost; That by his abilities God is glorified, and we are instructed, and the interests of Vertue and holy Religion are promoted; That by this means God, who deserves that all Souls should serve him for ever, is likely to have a fairer harvest of glory and service, and therefore that Envy is against him; That if we envy because we are not the instrument of this good to others, we must consider that we destre the praise to our selves, not to God. Admiration of a man supposes him to be inferiour to the person so admired, but then be is pleased so to be; but Envy supposes him as low,

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and he is displeased at it; and the envious man is not only less than the other man's vertue, but also contrary: The former is a vanity, but this is a vice; that wants wisdom, but this wants wisdom and charity too; that supposes an absence of some good, but this is a direct affli-

Hion and calamity.

4. And after all this, if the Preacher be not despised, he may proceed chearfully in doing his duty, and the Hearer may have some advantages by every Sermon. I remember that Homer says the woers of Penelope laught at Ulysses, because at his return he called for a Loaf, and did not, to shew his gallantry, call for Swords and Spears. Ulysses was so wise as to call for that he needed, and had it, and it did him more good than a whole Armory would in his case. So is the plainest part of an easie and honest Sermon, it is the sincere milk of the word, & nourishes a man's Soul, though represented in its own natural simplicity; and there is hardly any Orator but you may find occasion to praise something of him. When Plato misliked the order and disposition of the Oration of Lysias, yet he praised the good words and the elocution of the man. Euripides was commended for his fulnes, Parmenides for his composition, Phocylides for his eafineß, Archilochus for his argument, Sophocles for the unequalness of his style: So may men praise their Preacher; be speaks pertinently, or he contrives wittily, or he speaks comely, or the man is pious, or charitable, or he bath a good Text, or he speaks plainly, or he is not tedious, or if he be, he is at least industrious, or he is the messenger of God; and that will not fail us, and let us love him for that. And we know those that love can eafily commend any thing, because they like every thing: and they say, fair men are like Angels, and the black are manly, and the pale look like boney and the stars; and the crook-nosed are like the sons of Kings, and if they be flat

flat they are gentle and easie, and if they be deformed they are humble, and not to be despised, because they have upon them the impresses of Divinity, and they are the sons of God. He that despises his Preacher, is a hearer of arts and learning, not of the word of God: and though when the word of God is set off with advantages and entertainments of the better faculties of our humility, it is more useful and of more effect; yet when the word of God is spoken truly, though but read in plain language, it will become the Disciple of Jesus to love that man whom God sends, and the publick order and the Laws have imployed, rather than to despise the weakness of him who

delivers a mighty word.

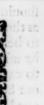
Thus it is fit that men should be affected and imployed when they hear and read Sermons, coming hither not us into a Theatre, where men observe the gestures or nois ses of the people, the brow and eyes of the most busie cenfurers, and make parties, and go aside with them that dislike every thing, or else admire not the things, but the persons; but as to a Sacrifice, and as to a School where Vertue is taught and exercised, and none come but such as put themselves under discipline, and intend to grow wiser, and more vertuous to appease their passion, from violent to become smooth and even, to have their Faith established, and their Hope confirm'd, and their Charity enlarged. They that are otherwise affected do not do their duty: but if they be for minded as they ought, I and all men of my imployment shall be secured against the tongues and faces of men who are ingeniosi in alieno libro, witty to abuse and undervalue another man's Book. And yet besides these spiritual arts already reckoned, I have one security more: For (unless I deceive my self) I intend the glory of God sincerely, and the service of Jesus in this publication; and therefore being I do not feek my self or my own reputation, I shall not

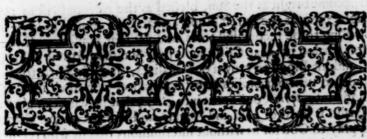
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be troubled if they be lost in the voices of busic people, so obat I be accepted of God, and found of him in the day of the Lord's misitations of the Lord's misitations.

My Lord It was your charity and nobleness that gave me opportunity to do this fervice (little or great) unto Religion, and whoever shall find any advantage to their Soul by reading the following Discounses, if they know, how to bles Gods and to bless all them that are God's infruments in doing them benefit, will (I hope) help to produce bleffings to your Person and Family, and say a holy prayer, and name your Lordship in their Litanies, and remember that at your own charges you have digged a well, and placed cifterns in the bigh ways, that they may drink and be refreshed; and obeir Souls may bles your My Lordy I hope this, even because Ivery much defire it; and because now exceedingly deserve it; and above all, because God is good and gracious; and loves to reward fueb a Charity, and fuch a Religion us is yours, by which you have imployed me in the fenvice of God and it the ministries to your Family. My Lord, Lun most heartily, and for very many dear Obligations,

put themselves under discipline, and intend to grow wiser, and more vertuous to appeals their tassion, from violent tassission homegically of their tassissions. They have their tasts of the sold of their latter of the sold of their latter of their days and they that are otherwise as they oright, I and all men of viv imployment shall be served against the tongues and faces conserved one ingeniosi in alieno libro, with to abuse and undervalue sugather man's libro, with to abuse and undervalue sugather man's libro, with the selection of sold intends the strength of the sugather man's libro, with the selection of sold intends the strength of sold intends the strength of sold intends, and the served of selection of the strength of sold intends the selection. I shall not the seek thy self or my own reparation, I shall not be





Sermon I.

WHITSUNDAY

OF THE

SPIRIT of GRACE.

Rom. 8. 9, 10.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. * And if Christ he in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.

His day, in which the Church commemorates the Deficient of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, was the first beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the Religion was professed: now the Apostles sirst opened their Commission, and read it to all the people. [The Lord gave his Spirit] or [The Lord

gave his Word and great was the company of the Preachers. For so I make bold to render that Prophecy of David. Christ was the Word of God, Verbum aternum; but the Spirit was the Word of God, Verbum patefactum: Christ was the Word manifested in the selfs; the Spirit was the Word manifested to selfs, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against the selfs. The Gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but the manifestation of the Spirit is the Gospel of Jesus Christ: and because he was this day manifested, the Gospel was this day sirst preached, and it became a Law to us, called * the Law of the Spirit of life; that is, a Law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal. But the Gospel is called the Spirit; 1. Because it contains in it such glorious Mysteries which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter it self, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of humane understanding could have found out the Incarnation of a God; that two Natures a sinite, and an infinite could have been concentred into one Hypostasis (or person;) that a Virgin should be a Mother; that dead men should live again; that the μόνις ὁςτων λυθένων, the ashes of disloved bones should

*Rom.8.2.

T.

? should become bright as the Sun, blessed as the Angels, swift in motion SERM. as thought, clear as the purest Noon; that God should so love us, as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that himself must die that he might pardon us; that God's most holy Son should give us his Body to eat, and his Blood to crown our Chalices, and his Spirit to fanctifie our Souls, to turn our bodies into temperance, our Souls into Minds, our Minds into Spirit, our Spirit into glory; that he who can give us all things, who is Lord of Men and Angels, and King of all the Creatures, should pray to God for us without intermission; that he who reigns over all the world, should at the day of Judgment give up the Kingdom to God the Father, and yet, after this refignation, himself and we with him should for ever reign the more gloriously; that we should be justified by Faith in Christ, and that Charity should be a part of Faith, and that both should work as acts of duty, and as acts of relation; that God should crown the imperfect indeavours of his Saints with glory, and that a humane act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance; that the wicked, for the transient pleasure of a few minutes, should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains; that the waters of Baptism when they are hallowed by the Spirit shall purge the Soul from sin; and that the Spirit of man shall be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious Elements, and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to Heaven: and after all this, that all Christian people, all that will be faved, must be partakers of the Divine Nature, of the Nature, the infinite Nature of God, and must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them? These are Articles of so mysterious a Philosophy, that we could have inferred them from no premisses, discours'd them upon the stock of no natural or scientifical principles; nothing but God and God's Spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the Gospel is Spiritus patefactus, the manifestation of the Spirit, ad adificationem (as the Apostle calls it) for edification and building us up to be a Holy Temple to the Lord.

1 Cor. 12.7.

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious Articles, we could not by any humane power have understood them, unless the Spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new Capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. Animalis homo, Ψυχιώς, that is, as S. Jude expounds the word, πνεύμα μιλ έχων, the animal or the natural man, the man that hath not the Spirit, cannot difcern the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned; that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of Righteousness, and by that eye whose bird is the Holy Dove, whose Candle is the Gospel.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Scio incapacem te sacramenti, Impie, Non posse cæcis mentibus mysterium Haurire nostrum: nil diurnum nox capit.

Prudent.

He that shall discourse Euclid's Elements to a Swine, or preach (as Venerable Bede's story reports of him) to a Rock, or talk Metaphy-ficks to a Boar, will as much prevail upon his assembly as S. Peter and S. Paul could do upon uncircumcised hearts and ears, upon the indisposed Greeks and prejudicate Jews. An Ox will relish the tender flesh of Kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual and unfanctified man will do the discourses of Angels, or of an Apostle, if he

should come to preach the Secrets of the Gospel. And we find it true by a fad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by his SER M. fervants the Prophets, by his Son, by his Apostles, by Sermons, by Spiritual Books, by thousands of Homilies, and arts of counsel and infinuation; and we fit as unconcerned as the pillars of a Church, and hear the Sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a Gazett? And if ever it comes to pass that we tremble, as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of righteousness, and judgment to come, then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to do but to give the good man a hearing; and (as Anacharsis said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to cast account withal; so) our Hearers make use of Sermons and discourses Evangelical but to fill up void spaces of their time, to help to tell an hour with, or pass it without tedious-The reason of this is, a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness: they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; for these things are spiritually discerned. They would think the Preacher rude, if he should say they are not Christians, they are not within the Covenant of the Gospel: but it is certain that the Spirit of Manifestation is not yet upon them; and that is the first effect of the Spirit, whereby If we do not we can be called fons of God, or relatives of Christ. apprehend and greedily suck in the pecepts of this holy Discipline as aptly as Merchants do discourse of gain, or Farmers of fair Harvests, we have nothing but the Name of Christians; but we are no more fuch really than Mandrakes are men, or Spunges are living creatures.

The Gospel is called Spirit, because it consists of Spiritual Promiles and Spiritual Precepts, and makes all men that embrace it truly to be Spiritual men: and therefore S. Paul adds an Epithete beyond this, calling it a quickning Spirit, that is, it puts life into our Spirits, which the Law could not. The Law bound us to punishment, but did not help us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of eternal life to its Disciples. The Spirit, that is, the Gospel, only does this: and this alone is it which comforts afflicted minds, which puts activeness into wearied Spirits, which inflames our cold desires, and does avagances blow up sparks into live coals, and coals up to flames, and flames to per-petual burnings. And it is impossible that any man who believes and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, the never-ceasing joys that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the Gospel, should not desire them; and, unless he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty pursuances. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madness in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals, that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken Fever, or the vanity of a Mistress, or the rage of a Passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However, this Promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our

4. But beyond this, is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithful. The Gospel is called the spirit, because by and in the Gospel God hath given to us not only the Spirit of Manifestation, that is, of Instruction and of Catechism, of Faith and confident affent; but the Spirit of Confirmation or Oblignation to all them that believe

and obey the Gospel of Christ: that is, the power of God is come upon SERM. our hearts, by which in an admirable manner we are made fure of a glorious inheritance; made fure (I fay) in the nature of the thing; and our own perswasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning and a reasonable Hope: in the strength of which, and by whose aid, as we do not doubt of the performance of the Promise. fo we vigorously pursue all the parts of the Condition, and are inabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprison'd by ambition and secular designs. the Spirit of God does work in all his fervants; and is called the Spirit of Oblignation, or the Confirming Spirit, because it confirms our hope, and affures our title to life eternal; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the Gospel. And this is the sence of [the Spirit] mention'd in the Text, Te are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you: That is, if ye be made partakers of the Gospel, or of the Spirit of Manifestation, if ye be truly intitled to God, and have received the Promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are spiritual, ye are in the spirit : if ye have the Spirit in one sence to any purpose, ye have it also in another: if the Spirit be in you, you are in it; if it hath given you hope, it hath also inabled and ascertain'd your duty. For the Spirit of Manifestation will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not the Spirit of Oblignation: if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to great purposes of holiness, all other pretences are vain, ye are still in the sless, which shall never inherit the Kingdom of God.

In the Spirit that is, in the power of the Spirit. So the Greeks call him Evocov who is poffested by a Spirit, whom God hath filled with a celestial immission; he is said to be in God, when God is in him. And it is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards; they are in custodia, that is, in their power, under their command, moved at their dispose, they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visiters whom they appoint, and must be imployed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit; that is, they believe as he teaches, they work as he inables, they chuse what he calls good, they are friends of his friends, and they hate with his hatred: with this only difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their Keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills; but they that are under the command of the Spirit do all things which the Spirit commands, but they do them chearfully; and their Will is now the prisoner, but it is in libera custodia, the Will is where it ought to be, and where it defires to be, and it cannot eafily chuse any thing else, because it is extremely in love with this : as the Saints and Angels in their state of Beatifick vision cannot chuse but love God; and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessen'd, because the object fills all the capacities of the Will and the Understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object, or the apprehension: but the Will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation, when it intirely purfues a good with fo certain determination and clear election, that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the fons of God; it is an holy and amiable Captivity to the Spirit: the Will of man is in love with those Chains which draw us to God, and loves the Fetters that

confine

confine us to the pleasures and Religion of the Kingdom. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrain'd, and his head is pri- SERM. foner, when it is encircled with a Crown: fo when the Son of God had made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as Princes within the circles of their Diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the Law is a Law of Liberty, and his Service is perfect freedome; and the more we are subjects, the more we thall reign as Kings; and the faster we run, the easier is our burden; and Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion, without them the body falls; and we do not pity birds, when in Summer we wish them unfeathered and callow, or bald as eggs, that they might be cooler and lighter. Such is the load and captivity of the foul, when we do the work of God, and are his servants, and under the Government of the spirit. They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of Out-laws, and the licentiousness of Anarchy, and the freedom of sad Widows and distressed Orphans: For so Rebels, and fools, and children long to be rid of their Princes and their Guardians, and their Tutors, that they may be accurfed without law, and be undone without controle, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher and without discipline. He that is in the Spirit is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great Heirs are; only, the first seizure the Spirit makes, is upon the Will. He that loves the yoke of Christ, and the discipline of the Gospel, he is in the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit's power.

Upon this foundation the Apostle hath built these two Propositions: 1. Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; he does not belong to Christat all: he is not partaker of his Spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of his glory. 2. Whosoever is in Christ, is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ, that is, lives a Spiritual, a holy, and a sanctified life: These are to be considered diffinctly

1. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediatly before the Ascension, our blessed Saviour bid his Disciples tarry in Jeru-Salem till they should receive the Promise of the Father. Whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in the actual Communion of the Church of God, shall certainly receive this Promise. For it is made to you and to your Children, (faith S. Peter) and to as many as the Lord our God shall call. All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great Instrument of distinction betweeen the Law and the Gospel. In the Law, God gave his Spirit, 1. to some; to them, 2. extraregularly, 3. without folemnity, 4. in small proportions, like the dew upon Gideon's fleece; a little portion was wet sometime with the dew of Heaven, when all the earth besides was dry. And the Jews cal-led it Filiam vocis, the Daughter of a Voice, still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate, by way of Enthuliasm, rather than of instruction; and God spake by the Prophets, transmitting the found as through an Organ-pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understood not. But in the Gospel, the Spirit is given without measure: first poured forth upon our Head Christ Jesus; then descending upon the beard of Aaron the Fathers of the Church; and thence falling, like the tears of the ballam of Judea, upon the foot of the plant, upon the lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a folemn ceremony, and conveyed by a Sacrament: and is now, not the Daughter

Daughter of a voice, but the Mother of many voices, of divided SERM. Tongues and united Hearts; of the tongues of Prophets, and the duty of Saints; of the Sermons of Apostles, and the wisdom of Governours. It is the Parent of boldness and forritude to Martyrs, the fountain of Learning to Doctors, an Ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the Ship and bounds of the Catholick Church: fo that old men and young men, maidens and boys, the Scribe and the unlearned, the Judge and the Advocate, the Priest and the people, are full of the Spirit, if they belong to God. Moses's wish is fulfilled, and all the Lord's people are Prophets in some sence or other.

In the wisdom of the Ancients it was observed, that there are four great Cords which tie the Heart of Man to inconvenience, and a prison, making it a fervant of vanity, and an heir of corruption; 1. Pleasure,

and 2. Pain; 3. Fear, and 4. Desire.

Πεὸς τὸ τετεάχος δον δ' δλόν, τω κοδονήν, Επτουμίαν, λύπω, Φόβον, वंद्रमान्डकंड प्रमे मान्यामंड पर्य माड करें.

These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and and all the powers that God hath given him.

> έτοι χε, έτοι κ λά σωλάγχνων ael χωρέσι κ κυκώσιν άνθρώπων κέαρ, faid Agarbon.

These are those evil spirits that possess the heart of man, and mingle with all his actions ; fo that either men are tempted to I. Luft by Pleasure, or 2. to baser arts by Covetousness, or 3. to Impatience by Sorrow, or 4. te dishanourable actions by Fear: and this is the state of man by nature, and under the Law, and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cur'd these four inconveniences, and restrained or

fweetned these unwholsom waters.

1. God gave us his Spirit that we might be insensible of worldly Pleafures, having our Souls wholly fill'd with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when God's Spirit hath entred into us, and possessed us as his Temple, or as his dwelling, instantly we begin to taste Manna, and to loath the diet of Egypt; we begin to confider concerning Heaven, and to prefer Eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the Soul above the sottish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a Drunken meeting cannot make recompence for the pains of a Surfeit, and that night's intemperance; much less for the torments of Eternity: Then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustful appetites is not worth the charges of a Chirurgeon; much less can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sickness, the death and the hell of lustful persons: Then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a Crown unjustly; or that for the hazard of a Victory, he should throw away all his hopes of Heaven certainly.

A man that hath tafted of God's Spirit can instantly discern the madness that is in Rage, the folly and the disease that is in Envy, the anguish and tediousness that is in Lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith and telling a Lie; and understands things truly as they are: that is, That Charity is the greatest Nobleness in the world; that Religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that Humility is the furest way to Honour. And all these relishes are

nothing

nothing but antepalts of Heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow SERM. the Lamb, and the Virgins sing there where the Mother of God shall reign; and the Zealous converters of Souls, and labourers in God's vineyard, shall worship eternally, where S. Peter and S. Paul do wear their Crowns of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God: the very expectation of which, proceeding from a hope begotten in us by the Spirit of Manifestation, and bred up and strengthened by the Spirit of Oblignation, is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a Spiritual man can no more be removed or intic'd from the love of God and of Religion, than the Moon from her Orb, or a Mother from loving the fon of her joyes, and of her fortows.

This was observed by S. Peter [As new-born babes defire the sincere milk 1 Pet. 2.2: of the Word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.] When once we have tasted the grace of God, the fweetnesses of his Spirit; then no food but the food of Angels, no cup but the cup of Salvation, the Divining cup, in which we drink Salvation to our God, and call upon the Name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving. And there is no greater external testimony that we are in the Spirit, and that the Spirit dwells in we, than if we find joy and delight and spiritual pleasures in the greatest mysteries of our Religion; if we Communicate often, and that with appetite, and a forward choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly fixed upon God, and upon the Offices of a holy worship. He that loaths good meat is fick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to the food of Angels, the wine of elect Souls, is fit to succeed the Prodigal at his banquet of fin and husks, and to be partaker of the table of Devils : but all they who have God's Spirit, love to feast at the Supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the Spirit, or fervants to the Spirit. I have read of a Spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream, but fuch as made great impression upon him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasms, not easily disbanding; and when he awaked he knew not his Cell, he remembred not him that slept in the same Dorter, nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oyl from wine; but call'd out for his Vision again: Redde mihi campos meos storidos, columnam auream, Comitem Hieronymum, offistentes Angelos; Give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion S. Jerome, my affistant Angels. And this lasted till he was told of his duty, and matter of obedience, and fear of a fin had difincharmed him, and caused him to take care lest he lose the substance out of greediness to possess the

Madow. And if it were given to any of us to see Paradise, or the third Heaven, (as it was to S. Paul) could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any Guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but Heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead this ther? Now what a Vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain him. They that have him really, and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create, or enlarge our appetites of things below: Spiritual men are not delign'd to reign upon earth, but to reign over their lusts and fortish appetites. The Spirit doth not enflame our thirst of Wealth, but extinguishes it, and makes us to effeem all things as loft, and as dung,

SERM. Ambition but longings after Heaven, no Revenge but against our selves for sinning; nothing but God and Christ: Deus meus, & omnia: and Date nobis Animas, catera vobis tollite, (as the King of Sodom said to Abraham;) Secure but the Souls to us, and take our goods. Indeed this is a good sign that we have the Spirit.

1 Ep. 3.9.

S. John spake a hard saying, but by the Spirit of manifestation we are all taught to understand it : Whosoever is born of God doth not commit fin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. The feed of God is the Spirit, which hath a plastic power to efform us in similitudinem filiorum Dei, into the image of the Sons of God, and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit dwells in us, we cannot fin 3 that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures to sin. And as we say, we cannot endure such a potion, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature : so all spiritual men, all that are born of God, and the feed of God remains in them, they cannot fin; cannot without trouble, and doing against their natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can fip up by little draughts mixtures of Aloes and Rhubarb, of Henbane, or the deadly Nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally and willingly, chearfully, or with delight. Every fin is against a good man's nature: He is ill at ease when he hath missed his usual Prayers, he is amaz'd if he have fallen into an Errour, he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin as he thinks of an enemy, or the horrors of a midnight Apparition: for all his capacities, his understanding, and his chusing faculties are filled up with the opinion and perswasions, with the love and with the desires, of God. And this, Isay, is the great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an Antidote against worldly Pleasures. And therefore S. Paul joyns them as consequent to each other: [For it is impossible for those who were once enlightned, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made parta-kers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, &c.] First, we are enlightned in Baptism, and by the Spirit of Manifestation, the revelations of the Gospel: then we relish and taste interiour excellencies, and we receive the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Confirmation, and he gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come; that is, of the great efficacy that is in the Article of Eternal life, to perswade us to Religion and holy living: then we feel, that as the belief of that Article dwells upon our understanding, and is incorporated into our wills and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to defie all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortifie it by the powers of this Article: those are the powers of the world to come.

Heb.6.9.

I.

2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ as an antidote against Sorrows, against Impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the cross. There are in Scripture noted two births besides the natural; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The sirst is to be born of water and the Spirit. It is it did door, one thing signified by a divided appellative, by two substantives, [Water and the Spirit] that is, Spiritus Aqueus, the Spirit moving upon the waters of Baptism. The second is to be born of Spirit and sire, for so Christ was promised to baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with sire; that is, cum Spiritu igneo,

with a fiery spirit, the Spirit as it descended in Pentecost in the shape of fiery Tongues. And as the watery Spirit washed away the Sins of the SERM. Church, so the Spirit of fire enkindles Charity and the Love of God. To wife xatalges, To work ayviges, (says Plutarch.) The Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it inables the Church with Gifts and Graces. And from these there is another operation of the New birth, but the same Spirit, the Spirit of Rejoicing, or Spiritus exultans, Spiritus letil Rom.15.13. tie. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghoft. There is a certain Joy and spiritual rejoicing that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow; a joy given to allay the forrows of fecular troubles, and to alleviate the burthen of perfecution. This & Paul notes to this purpole; [And ye became followers of 1 Thef. 1.6. us and of the Lord, baving received the Word in much affiction, with joy of the Holy Ghoft.] Wordly afflictions and spiritual joyes may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply us out of his store-houses, the Sorrows of this world would be more and unmixt, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for natural confidences. For who shall make him recompence that loft his life in a Duel, fought about a draught of Wine, or a cheaper Woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments in testimony of a Proposition of natural Philosophy? And by what Instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick, and poor, and difgraced, and vicious, and lies curfing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That man's condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Comfort. Now this Spirit of Comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking in the inheritance of Jesus, This is the faith and patience of the Saints; this is the Refreshment of all wearied travellers, the Cordial of all languishing finners, the Support of the scrupulous, the Guide of the doubtful, the Anchor of timorous and fluctuating Souls, the Confidence and the Staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good Conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of Restitution: and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of Christianity, that it was no infrequent thing to fee holy persons court a Martyrdom with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us we are odiyo we. Inopes nos atque pullitifinxerunt animi; we have little Souls, little Faith, and as little Patience; we fall at every stumbling-block, and fink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our Souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God fills us with joy in believing: and a man that is in a great joy cares not for any trouble that is less than his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that he hath turn'd it into a precept, Rejoice ever- 1 Thes. 5.16. more; and Rejoice in the Lord always, and again Isay rejoyce. rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us, er ελπίδι χαίες ενίες. fo the Apostle, Rejoicing in hope. For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible Comfort to overslow the spirit of a man, and Rom. 12.12. thereby loves to refresh his sorrows; yet that is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it: but the hope of life eternal can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us fuffer any thing, or to do any thing.

SERM.
II.

Utcunque pracedes, supremum Carpere iter comites parati.

To death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal: as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwrack. And I desire you by the way to observe how good a God we serve, and how excellent a Religion Christ taught, when one of his great Precepts is, that we should rejoyce and be exceeding glad: and God hath given us the spirit of Rejoycing, not a sullen, melancholy spirit; not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the spirit of his son, consigning us by a holy Conscience to joys unspeakable and full of glory. And from hence you may also infer, that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident, they put out their own fires which the Spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behind the cloud.

SERMON II.

PART II.

He Spirit of God is given us as an Antidote against evil Concupiscences and sinful desires, and it is then called the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication. For ever since the affections of the outward man prevail'd upon the ruines of the Soul, all our desires were sensual, and therefore hurtful: for ever after, our Body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance or imperfection of Gentile Philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths full of bloud, and their hearts sull of malice; and they prayed accordingly, for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, for the satisfaction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by

any lust, by any Devil whatsoever. The Jews were better taught, for God was their Teacher, and he gave the Spirit to them in single rayes. But as the Spirit of Obsignation was given to them under a seal, and within a Veil; so the spirit of Manifestation or Patefaction was like the Gem of a Vine, or the Bud of a Rose, plain indices and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetness; but yet scarce out of the doors of their Causes: they had the Infancy of knowledge, and Revelations to them were given as Catechism is taught to our children; which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the tongue of a Bee, and understand with the heart of a child; that is, weakly and imperfectly. And they understand so little, that, 1. They thought Cod heard them not, unless they spake their Prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips; and 2. Their forms of Prayer were so few and seldom, that to teach a Form of Prayer, or to compose a Collect, was thought a work fit for a Prophet, or the founder of an Institution. 3. Add to this, that as their Promises were temporal, so were their hopes; as were their hopes, so

were their delires; and according to their delires fo were their Prayers. And although the Pfalms of David was their Great Office, and the SERM. treasury of Devotion to their Nation, (and very worthily;) yet it was full of wither for Temporals, Invocations of God the Avenger, on God the Lord of Hofts, on God the Enemy of their Enemies: and they defired their Nation to be prospered, and themselves blessed, and distinguished from all the world by the effects of such desires. the state of Prayer in their Synagogues; save only that it had also this allay; 4. That their addresses to God were crass, material, typical and full of thadows and imaginary, and patterns of things to come; and for in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect. But that we may see how great things the Lord hath done for us, God hath poured his Spirit into our hearts, the Spirit of Prayer and Suppli-

And now, I. Christians pray in their Spirit, with sighs and groans, and know that God, who dwells within them, can as clearly diffinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit, as plainly as he knows the voice of his own thunder, or could discern the letter of the Law written in the Tables of Stone, by the finger of God.

2. Likewise the Spirit belpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. That is, when God sends an affliction or persecution upon us, we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand upon the wound, and never take it off, but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadness; and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sickness, to be delivered from a Tyrant, to be snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger. But the Spirit of God hath from all fad accidents drawn the veil of error and the Cloud of intolerableness, and hath taught us that our happiness cannot consist in freedom or deliverances from perfecutions, but in patience, refignation, and noble sufferance and that we are not then so blessed when God hath turn'd our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of vertues : so that now the spirit having belped our infirmities, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our forrow and impatience, by this Proposition, that [All things work together for the good of them that fear God,] he hath taught us to pray for Grace, for Patience under the Cross, for Charity to our persecutors, for rejoicing in tribulations, for perseverance and boldness in the Faith, and for whatsoever will bring us safely to Hea-

3. Whereas only a Moses or a Samuel, a David or a Daniel, a John the Baptist or the Messias himself, could describe and indite forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving to the tune and accent of Heaven; now every wise and good man is instructed perfectly in the Scriptures (which are the Writings of the Spirit) what things he may, and what things he must

4. The Spirit of God hath made our Services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and Religion, the consequents of a spiritual Sacrifice, and of a holy union with God. The Prayer of a Christian is with the effects of the Spirit of Sandification; and then we pray with the Spirit, when we pray with holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift of the Spirit. And this is by Saint James called [the prayer of Faith,] and is said to be certain that it shall prevail. Such a praying with the Spirit, when our Prayers are the voices of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sanctified by God's Spirit, shall

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never fail of its effect ; because then it is that the spirit himself ma-SERM. keth intercession for m ; that is, hath enabled us to do it upon his strengths; we speak his sence, we live his life, we breath his accents, we defire in order to his purposes, and our persons are gracious by his Holiness, and are accepted by his interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ. This is praying with the Spirit. To which by way of explication I add these two annexes of holy Prayer, in respect of which also every good man prays with the Spirit.

5. The Spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our Prayers: and this Saint Paul calls [ferving of God in his Spirit, es avecuali us] that is, with a willing mind: not as Jonas did his errand, but as Christ did die for us; he was streightned till he had accomplished it. And they that fay their Prayers out of custom only, or to comply with external circumstances or collateral advantages, or pray with trouble and un-willingness, give a very great testimony that they have not the Spirit of Christ within them, that Spirit which maketh intercession for the Saints: but he that delighteth in his Prayers, not by a sensible or phantastick pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his Prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living, and praying accordingly, that man hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this Spirit it is that Christ prays in Heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace; our Prayers are an abominable facrifice, and fend up to God no better a perfume, than if we burned Alla fætida, or the raw flesh of a murthered man upon the Altar of

6. The Spirit of Christ and of Prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together : for as our Faith is, and our trust in God, so is our Hope, and so is our Prayer; weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works, and in defires. For the words of Prayer are no part of the Spirit of Prayer. Words may be the Body of it, but the Spirit of Prayer alwayes confifts in Holines, that is, in holy defires, and holy actions. Words are not properly capable of being holy; all words are in themselves servants of things; and the holiness of a Prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expression, but in the Spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its imployment. This is the verification of that great Prophecy which Christ made, that [in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth;] that is, with a pure mind, with holy defires, for spiritual things, according to the mind of the Spirit, in the imitation of Christ's intercession, with perseverance, with charity or love. That is the Spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the Gospel, and the formalities of Prayers as they are Christian and Evangelical.

7. Some men have thought of a seventh way, and explicate our praying in the Spirit by a mere volubility of language: which indeed is a direct undervaluing the Spirit of God and of Christ, the spirit of Manifestation and Intercession; it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the Law; it is to worship God in outward forms, and to think that God's Service confifts in shells and rinds, in lips, and voices, in shadows and images of things; it is to retire from Christ to Moses, and, at the best, it is a going from real Graces to imaginary Gifts. And when praying with the Spirit hath in it so many excellencies, and confilts of so many parts of Holiness, and Sanctification, and is an act

of the inner man; we shall be infinitely mistaken, if we let go this fubstance, and catch at the shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary useless gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men, is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the Spirit of Christ, as to make it no other than the breath of our Lungs. * For though it might be possible that at the first, and when Forms of Prayer were few and seldom, the Spirit of God might dictate the very words to the Apostles, and first Christians; yet it follows not that therefore he does so still to all that pretend praying with the Spirit. For if he did not then, at the first, dictate words, (as we know not whether he did or no) why shall he be supposed to do so now? If he did then, it follows that he does not now; because his doing it then was sufficient for all men since ! for so the Forms taught by the Spirit were patterns for others to imitate in all the descending Ages of the Church. There was once an occasion so great, that the Spirit of God did think it a work sit for Him, to teach a man to weave filk, or embroider gold, or work in brass, (as it happened to Bezaleel and Aboliab :) But then every weaver or worker in brass may by the same reason pretend that he works by the Spirit, as that he prays by the Spirit, if by Prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of working it was certain that the Spirit did teach, in the case of inditing or forming the words it is not certain whether he did or no; yet because in both it was extraordinary, (if it was at all) and ever fince in both it is infinitely needless; to pretend the Spirit in Forms of every mans making; (even though they be of contrary Religions, and pray one against the other) it may serve an end of a phantastick and hypochondriacal Religion, or a secret Ambition, but not the ends of God, or the honour of the Spirit.

The Jews in their declentions to folly and idolatry did worthip the Stone of imagination, that is, certain smooth Images, in which, by art magick, pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stoln goods; and God severely forbad this baseness. Iev.26.1. But we also have taken up this folly, and worship the Stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantalms and speculative images in our phansie, and we fall down and worship them; never considering that the Spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of Christian Religion; or father it is that duty in which all Graces are concentred. Prayer is Charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to God's will, a defiring according to the defires of Heaven, an imitation of Christ's intercession, and Prayer must suppose all Holiness, or else it is nothing: and therefore all that in which men need God's Spirit, all that is in order to Prayer. Baptism is but a Prayer, and the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is but a Prayer; a Prayer of Sacrifice representative, and a Prayer of Oblation, and a Prayer of Intercession, and a Prayer of Thanksgiving: And Obedience is a Prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then he hath fanctified the Prayer of the man, and not till then. And if ever there was, or could be any other praying with the Spirit, it was fuch a one as a wicked man might have; and therefore it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the Saints and men of the world. But this only (which I have described

SERM II.

from the fountains of Scripture) is that which a good man can have, SERM. and therefore this is it in which we ought to rejoyce; that he that glo-

ries may glory in the Lord.

Thus I have (as I could) described the effluxes of the Holy Spirit upon us in his great Channels. But the great effect of them is this: That as by the arts of the Spirits of darkness and our own malice our Souls are turned into fielh, (not in the natural sence, but in the Moral and Theological) and unimalis bomo is the same with carnalis, that is, his Soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the slesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: So, on the other fide, by the Grace of God, and the promise of the Father, and the influences of the Holy Ghoft, our Souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh, and reduced back to the intireness of animal operations, but they are heightned into spirit, and transform'd into a new nature. And

this is a new Article, and now to be considered.

S. Hierome tells of the Custom of the Empire; when a Tyrant was overcome, they us'd to break the head of his Statues, and upon the fame Trunk to fet the head of the Conquerour, and so it passed wholly for the new Prince. So it is in the Kingdom of Grace: As foon as the Tyrant Sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new Head, instantly we have a new Name given us, and we are esteemed a new Creation; and not only changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an effential constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so: and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the Gospel. Every man naturally confilts of Soul and Body; but every Christian man that belongs to Christ hath more: For he hath Body, and Soul, and Spirit. My Text is plain for it. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And by [Spirit] is not meant only the Graces of God, and his Gifts enabling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man than fo. But as when God made Man, he made him after bis own image, and breath'd into him the spirit of life, and he was made in animam viventem, into a living foul; then he was made a Man: So in the new creation, Christ, by whom God made both the worlds, intends to conform us to his Image, and he hath given us the spirit of Adoption, by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made new creatures, capable of a new state, intituled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wills: Vetera transierunt, & ecce omnia nova facta sunt; All things are become new. And this is called the seed of God, when it relates to the principle and cause of this production: But the thing that is produced is a Spirit, and that is as much in nature beyond a Soul, as a Soul is beyond This great Mystery I should not utter but upon the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible Doctor, I mean S. Paul, who from Christ taught the Church more secrets than all the whole Colledge besides: [And the very God of peace sandifie you wholly: and I pray God that your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.] We are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unless, besides our Souls and Bodies, our spirit also be kept blameless. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above humane reason: but the Word of God (saith the same Apostle) is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the Soul and the Spirit: and that hath taught us to distinguish the

Heb. 4.12.

principle

principle of a new life from the principle of the old, the celestial from

the natural; and thus it is.

The Spirit (as I now discourse of it) is a principle infused into us by God when we become his children, whereby we live the life of Grace, and understand the secrets of the Kingdom, and have passions and desires of things beyond and contrary to our natural appetites, enabling us not only to Sobriety, (which is the duty of the Body) not only to Justice which is the rectitude of the Soul, but to such a Sanctity as makes us like to God. *For so saith the Spirit of God; Be ye holy, as I am. be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as be in perfect; which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be in familiar waters in the likeness of that nature which God bath be in similitudine nature, in the likeness of that nature which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it we might resemble his excellency and holiness. And this I conceive to be the meaning of S. Peter, Ac- 2 Epist. 1.3.4. cording as his divine power bath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, (that is, to this new life of Godliness) through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine nature: fo we read it; but it is something mistaken: it is not & Selas, φύσεως, [The Divine nature,] for God's nature is indivisible, and incommunicable; but it is spoken participative, or per analogiam, [partakers of a Divine nature,] that is, of this new and God-like nature given to every person that serves God, whereby he is sanctified and made the child of God, and framed into the likeness of Christ. The Greeks generally call this xáe ισμα, a gracious Gift, an extraordinary superaddition to nature; not a fingle gift in order to fingle purposes, but an universal principle; and it remains upon all good men during their lives, and after their death, and is that white stone spoken of in the Revelation, and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but be that Apoc.2.17. hath it: And by this, God's Sheep at the day of Judgment shall be discerned from Goats. If their spirits be presented to God pure and unblameable, this great xáe 1940, this talent which God hath given to all Christians to improve in the banks of Grace and of Religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the sulness of the measure of Christ, (for it is Christ's Spirit; and as it is in us, it is called the sup-ply of the spirit of Jesus Christ,) then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall pass into an eternal inheritance in the portion of our elder Brother.

I need not to apply this Discourse: The very Mystery it self is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable,

by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness.

Quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna rependi;

He that gives great things to us ought to have great acknowledgments: and seneca said concerning wise men, That he that doth benefits to others, hides those benefits, as a man laies up great treasures in the earth, which he must never see with his eyes unless a great occasion forces him to dig the graves, and produce that which he buried; but all the while the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation. So it is with God and us: For this huge benefit of the Spirit, which God gives us, is for our good deposited into our Souls; not made for forms and oftentation, not to be looked upon, or ferve little ends; but growing in the secret of our Souls, and swelling up to a treasure SERM

II.

making us in this world rich by title and relation, but it shall be pro-SERM. duced in the great necessities of Dooms-day. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of God's Spirit, God will kindle another in his anger that shall never be quenched: but if we emertain God's Spirit with our own purities, and imploy it diligently, and serve it willingly, (for God's Spirit is a loving Spirit) then we shall really be turned into Spirits. Ireneus had a proverbial saying, Perfect funt qui tria fine que rela Deo exhibent; They that present three things right to God, they are perfect; that is, a chaste Body, a righteous sond, and a holy spirit. And the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amis, (though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery;) The Soul of man in this life is in potentia ad effe Spiritum, it is deligned to be a Spirit, but in the world to come it shall be actually as very a Spirit as an Angel is. And this state is expressed by the Apostle, calling it [the Earnest of the Spirit:] that is, here it is begun, and given us as an antepast of Glory, and a principle of Grace; but then we shall have it in plenitudine.

> regit idem Spiritus artus Orbe alio-

Here and there it is the same; but here we have the earnest, there the riches and the inheritance.

But then, if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we receive not the Spirit of God in vain, but remember it is a new life: and as no man can pretend that a person is alive, that doth not always do the works of life; so it is certain no man hath the Spirit of God, but he that lives the life of Grace, and doth the works of the Spirit, that is, in all holiness, and ju-

Stice, and fobriety.

Spiritus qui accedit animo, vel Dei est, vel Damonis, (faid Tertullian) Every man hath within him the Spirit of God, or the spirit of the Devil. The spirit of Fornication is an unclean Devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of Malice or Uncharitableness; for the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Love: for as by Purities God's Spirit sanctifies the Body, so by Love he purifies the Soul, and makes the Soul grow into a Spirit, into a Divine nature. But God knows that even in Christian societies we see the Devils walk up and down every day and every hour; the devil of Uncleannels, and the devil of Drunkenness; the devil of Malice, and the devil of Rage; the spirit of Filthy speaking and the spirit of Detraction, a Proud spirit, and the ipirit of Rebellion: and yet all call [Christian.] It is generally supposed, that unclean spirits walk in the night; and so it used to be; for they that are drunk, are drunk in the might, said the Apostle. But Suidas tells of certain Empuse that used to appear at Noon, at such time as the Greeks did celebrate the Funerals of the Dead; and at this day some of the Ruffians fear the Noon-day Devil, which appeareth like a mourning widow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their arms and legs, unless they worship her. The Prophet David speaketh of both kinds: Thou shalt not be afraid for the terrour by night; and, a ruina O Demonio meridiano, from the Devil at noon thou shalt be free. It were happy if we were so: but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their Scenes of darkness in the face of the Sun, in open defiance of God, and all Laws, and all Modelty.

Pfal.91.5.

There is in such men the spirit of Impudence, as well as of Impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher ; for every habitual fin SERM. doth not only put us into the power of the Devil, but turns us into his very nature: just as the Holy Ghost transforms us into the image of

Here therefore I have a greater Argument to perswade you to holy living than Mofes had to the fons of Ifrael. Behold I have fet before you life and death, bleffing and curfing ; fo faid Mofes: but I add, that I have upon the stock of this Scripture set before you the good Spirit and the bad, God and the Devil: chuse unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, you are of your father the Devil, ye are begot of his principles, and a down his pattern, and shall pass into his portion, when ye are led a prive by him at his will; and remember what a fad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternal portion of Devils. But he that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father and his Lord, he despites the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spiritual, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and his support, and Religion is his imployment, and Godliness is his gain: and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God; and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in Obedience to God, and in Charity to his brother. And of such a man we cannot make judgement by his fortune, or by his acquaintance; by his circumstances, or by his adherencies; for they are the appendages of a natural man: but the spiritual is judged of no man; that is, the rare excellencies that make him happy do not yet make him illustrious, unless we will reckon Vertue to be a great Fortune, and Holiness to be great Wisdom, and God to be the best Friend, and Christ the best Relative, and the Spirit the hugest Advantage, and Heaven the greatest Reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit down and reckon the selicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this; That since the Spirit of God is a new nature, and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught and enabled to ferve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of fuch actions which men are pleafed to call Sins of Infirmity. Who oever hath the Spirit of God lives the life of Grace: The Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often fins which we think un-

avoidable, because we call them Natural Infirmities.

But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.] The state of sin is a state of death. ftate of a man under the Law was a state of Bondage and Infirmity (as S. Paul largely describes him in the feventh Chapter to the Romans:)but he that hath the Spirit is made alive, and free and strong, and conquerour over all the powers and violences of fin. Such a man relifts temptations, falls not under the affault of fin, returns not to the fin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and forrow: but he that falls under a crime to which he still hath a strong and vigorous inclination, he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then fins again, and then weeps again, and calls himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to

H.

3.

that circle; this man hath not the Spirit: For where the Spirit of God is, SERM. there is Liberty; there is no fuch Bondage, and a returning folly to the commands of fin. But because men deceive themselves with calling this Bondage a pitiable and excusable Instrmity, it will not be useless to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men from the state

of a pretended Infirmity fall into a real death.

1. No great fin is a fin of Infirmity, or excusable upon that stock.

But that I may be understood, we must know that every fin is in some sence or other a sin of Insirmity. When a man is in the state of spiritual sickness or death, he is in a state of Insirmity; for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his Judgement, and weak in his Reasonings, impotent in his Passions, of childish refolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist as easily as the rude conjunt are of uncombining Cables in the violence of a Northern tempest: and he that is thus in infirmity cannot be excused; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to dealis duty. Such a man is a Servant of sin, a slave of the Devil, an her of corruption, absolutely under command and every man is so who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it. For what can he be but a servant of sin, who fain would avoid it, but cannot? that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him ; Christ dwells not in his Soul; for where the Son is, there is Liberty: and all that are in the Spirit are the fons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin. But then there are also fins of Infirmity which are single actions, intervening seldom, in little instances unavoidable, or through a faultless ignorance : Such as thefe are always the allays of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath paid, and they are never to be accounted to good men, save only to make them more wary, and more humble. Now concerning these it is that I say, No great sin is a sin of excusable or unavoidable Infirmity: Because whosoever hath received the Spirit of God, hath fufficient knowledge of his duty, and fufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of mind, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to Piety and Religion. No man can justly fay, that it is a fin of Infirmity that he was drunk : For there are but three causes of every sin, (a fourth is not imaginable.) 1. If Ignorance cause it, the sin is as sull of excuse as the Ignorance was innocent. But no Christian can pretend this to Drunkenness, to Murther, to Rebellion, to Uncleanness. For what Christian is so uninstructed but that he knows Adultery is a fin? 2. Want of observation is the cause of many indiscreet and soolish actions. Now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape, because in the whole it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit, as to consider and reslect upon every word and every thought. But it is, in this case, in God's Laws otherwise than in mans: the great Flies cannot pass through without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk, and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbour's wife before he be aware: therefore the less the instance is, the more likely is it to be a fin of Instrmity: and yet if it be never so little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of Insirmity. 3. But because great Crimes cannot pretend to pass undiscernably, it follows that they must come in at the door of Malice, that is, of want of Grace, in the absence of the Spirit 3 they destroy where-ever they come, and the man dies if they pass up-

Tt

It is true, there is flesh and blond in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule : the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail: And it SER M. were a strange condition, if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation and death, without all difference, save only that the godly sins unwillingly, and the ungodly sins willingly. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevarieated, the pretended unwillingness is the sign of a greater and a baser slavery, and of a condition before he endured. For the Servitude which is against mais intoleon less to be endured : For the Servitude which is against me is intolerable; but if I chuse the state of a Servant, I am free in my mind.

Libertatis servaveris umbrams Si quicquid jubeare velis .-

Certain it is, that fuch a person who fain would, but cannot chuse but -- " Tot reban commit Adultery or Drunkenness, is the veriest slave to fin that can be iniquis Paruiimagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit, and by the liberty of the mia of hat fola sons of God: * and there is no other difference, but that the mista-pudoris, Degeken good man feels his flavery, and fees his chains and his fetters; but neil jam potuiffetherefore it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be, a slave. we are Lucani. No man can be a servant of sin, and a servant of righteousness at the same time; but every man that hath the Spirit of God is a servant of righteoufness: and therefore whosoever find great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation, (as to the present) because they willingly or unwillingly (it matters not much whether of the two) are fervants of fin.

2. Sins of Infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness only according to the weakness or infirmity of a mans Understanding. So far as men (without their own fault) understand not their duty or are possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse, or discerning powers and acts, so far if a sin creeps upon them, it is as natural, and as free from a Law, as is the action of a child: But if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminal, and not excufed by our infirmity, because it is chosen; and a mans will hath no Infirmity, but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions and finful appetites: and that Infirmity is the state of Unregene-

3. The violence or strength of a Temptation is not sufficient to excufe an action, or to make it accountable upon the stock of a piriable and innocent Infirmity, if it leaves the Understanding still able to judge; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from our selves; and because we have in us a principle of baseness which this temptation meets, and only perswades me to act, because I love it. feph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man; and it is certain there are not many Christians but would fall under it, and call it a fin of Infirmity, fince they have been taught fo to abuse themselves, by fowing fig-leaves before their nakedness: But because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of Chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail upon him. Some men cannot by any art of Hell be tempted to be drunk; others can no more relift an invitation to fuch a meeting, than they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart-bloud, because their evil habits made them weak on that part. And some man that is fortified against Revenge, it may be will certain-

ly fall under a temptation to Uncleanness. For every temptation is great SERM. or small according as the man is; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand ound a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie against

his duty or his conscience.

4. No habitual fin, that is, no fin that returns constantly or frequently; that is repented of, and committed again, and still repented of, and then again committed; no fuch fin is excusable with a pretence of Infirmity: because that fin is certainly noted, and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weakness of Nature, but the weakness of Grace: the principle of this is an evil spirit, an habitual aversation from God, a dominion and empire of sin. And as no man for his inclinations and aptness to the fins of the flesh is to be called carnal, if he corrects his inclinations, and turns them into vertues: so no man can be called spiritual for his good wishes, and apt inclinations to goodness, if these inclinations pass not into acts, and these acts into habits, and holy customs, and walkings and conversation with God. But as natural concupiscence corrected becomes the matter of vertue: so these good inclinations, and condemnings of our fin, if they be ineffective and end in finful actions, are the perfect figns of a reprobate and unregenerate estate.

The summe is this: An animal man, a man under the Law, a Carnal man (for as to this they are all one) is fold under fin, he is a fervant of corruption, he falls frequently into the same fin to which he is tempted, he commends the Law, he consents to it that it is good, he does not commend fin, he does some little things against it; but they are weak and imperfect, his Lust is stronger, his Passions violent and unmortified, his Habits vitious, his Customs sinful, and he lives in the regions of fin, and dies and enters into its portion. But a spiritual man, a man that is in the state of Grace, who is born a-new of the Spirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, he is led by the Spirit, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigoroully; and although he some times slips, yet it is but seldom, it is in small instances: his life is such as he cannot pretend to be justified by Works and Merit, but by Mercy and the Faith of Jesus Christ; yet he never sins great fins: If he does, he is for that present faln from God's favour; and though possibly he may recover, (and the smaller, or seldomer the sin is, the sooner may be his restitution) yet for the present (I say) he is out of God's favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, fins not by any deliberate, consultive, knowing act: he is incident to such a furprize as may confift with the weakness and judgement of a good mans but whatfoever is or must be considered, if it cannot pass without confideration, it cannot pass without sin, and therefore cannot enter upon him while he remains in that state. For be that is in Christ, in him the body is dead by reason of sin. And the Gospel did not differ from the Law, but that the Gospel gives grace and strength to do whatsoever it commands; which the Law did not: and the greatness of the promise of eternal life is such an argument to them that consider it, that it must needs be of force sufficient to perswade a man to use all his faculties and all his strength that he may obtain it. God exacted all upon this stock; God knew this could do every thing: Nihil non in hoc presumpsit Dens (said one.) This will make a Satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despile reputation, and Saul to turn from a perfecutor to an Apostie. For since God

hath given us reason to chuse, and a promise to exchange for our Temperance, and Faith, and Charity, and Justice, for these (I say) Happi- SER M. ness, exceeding great Happiness; that we shall be Kings, that we shall reign with God, with Christ, with all the holy Angels for ever, in Felicity fogreat that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us to do our duty. God hath not in Heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger. Which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of his we walk in his ways, and be ingrafted into his stock, and bring forth his fruits, the fruits of the Spirit, then we are in Christ, and Christ in us, then we walk in the Spirit, and the spirit dwells in us, and our portion shall be there where Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us, that is, at the right hand of his Father for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon III.

THE

DESCENDING and ENTAILED CURSE Cut off.

Exodus 20. part of the 5. verse.

. I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that bate me:

6. And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that

love me and keep my Commandments.

T is not necessary that a Commonwealth should give pensions to Orators, to disswade men from running into houses infected with the Plague, or to intreat them to be out of love with violent torments, or to create in men evil opinions concerning Famine or painful deaths: Every man hath a sufficient stock of self-love, upon the strength of which he hath entertained principles strong enough to secure himself against voluntary mischiefs, and from running into states of deaths and violence. A man would think that this I have now faid were in all cases certainly true; and I would to God it were. For that which is the greatest evil, that which makes all evils, that which turns good into evil, and every natural evil into a greater forrow, and makes that forrow lafting and perpetual; that which sharpens the edge of swords, and makes Agues to be Fevers, and Fevers to turn into Plagues; that which puts stings into every fly, and uneafiness to every trifling accident, and strings every whip with Scorpions, (you know I must needs mean Sin;) that evil men suffer, patiently, and chuse willingly, and run after it greedily, SERM.
III.

and will not fuffer themselves to be divorced from it : and therefore God hath hired servants to fight against this evil; he hath set Angels with fiery swords to drive us from it, he hath imployed Advocates to plead against it, he hath made Laws and Decrees against it, he hath dispatched Prophets to warn us of it, and hath established an Order of men, men of his own Family, and who are fed at his own charges, (I mean the whole Order of the Clergy) whose office is like watchmen to give an Alarm at every approach of Sin, with as much affrightment as if an enemy were near, or the Sea broke in upon the flat Countrey 3 and all this only to perswade men not to be extremely miserable, for nothing, for vanity, for a trouble, for a disease: for some sins naturally are diseases; and all others are natural nothings, mere privations or imperfections, contrary to goodness, to felicity, to God himself. And yet God hath hedged Sin round about with thorns, and Sin of it self too brings thorns; and it abuses a man in all his capacities, and it places poison in all those seats and receptions where he could possibly entertain happiness. For if Sin pretend to please the Sense, it doth first abuse it thamefully, and then humours it: it can only feed an imposthume; no natural, reasonable, and perfective appetite: and besides its own essential appendages and proprieties, things are so ordered, that a fire is kindled round about us, and every thing within us, above, below us, and on every side of us, is an argument against, and an enemy to sin; and for its single pretence, that it comes to please one of the Senses, one of those faculties which are in us the same they are in a Cow, it hath an evil fo communicative, that it doth not only work like poison, to the disfolution of Soul and Body, but it is a fickness like the Plague, it infects all our houses, and corrupts the air, and the very breath of Heaven: for it moves God first to jealousie, (and that takes off his friendship and kindness towards us) and then to anger; and that makes him a resolved enemy; and it brings evil, not only upon our selves, but upon all our relatives, upon our selves and our children, even the children of our Nephews, ad natos natorum & qui nascentur ab illis, to the third and fourth generation. And therefore if a man should despise the eye or fword of man, if he fins, he is to contest with the jealousie of a provoked God: If he doth not regard himself, let him pity his pretty Children: If he be angry and hates all that he fees, and is not follicitous for his Children, yet let him pity the generations which are yet unborn; let him not bring a curse upon his whole Family, and suffer his name to rot in curses and dishonours; let not his memory remain polluted with an eternal stain. If all this will not deterr a man from, sin there is no instrument left for that man's vertue, no hopes of his felicity, no recovery of his forrows and ficknesses; but he must fink under the stroaks of a jealous God into the dishonour of eternal ages, and the groanings of a never-cealing forrow.

God is a jealous God That is the first and great stroke he strikes against sin; he speaks after the manner of men; and in so speaking we know he that is jealous is suspicious, he is inquisitive, he is implacable. I. God is pleased to represent himself a person very suspicious, both in respect of persons and things. For our persons we give him cause enough: For we are sinners from our Mothers Womb: we make solemn Vows, and break them instantly; we cry for Pardon, and still renew the sin; we desire God to try us once more, and we provoke him ten times farther; we use the means of Grace to cure us, and we turn them into vices and opportunities of sin; we curse our sins, and yet long for them extreme-

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ly; we renounce them publickly, and yet fend for them in private and thew them kindness; we leave little offences, but our Faith and our DER M. Charity is not strong enough to master great ones; and sometimes we are sham'd out of great ones, but yet entertain little ones; or if we disclaim both yet we love to remember them, and delight in their past actions, and bring them home to us, at least by fiction of imagination, and we love to be betrayed into them: we would fain have things fo ordered by chance or power, that it may feem necessary to fin, or that it may become excusable, and dressed fitly for our own circumstances; and for ever we long after the flesh-pots of Egyps, the Garlick and the Onions: and we do so little esteem Manna, the food of Angels, we so loath the Bread of Heaven, that any Temptation will make us return to our fetters and our bondage. And if we do not tempt our felves, yet we do not refilt a Temptation; or if we pray against it, we defire not to be heard; and if we be affilted, yet we will not work together with those assistances: so that unless we be forced, nothing will be done. We are so willing to perish, and so unwilling to be saved, that we minister to God reason enough to suspect us, and therefore it is no wonder that God is jealous of us. We keep company with Harlots and pol-luted persons; we are kind to all Gods Enemies, and love that which I he hates : how can it be otherwise but that we should be suspected ? Let us make our best of it, and see if we can recover the good opinion of God; for as yet we are but suspected persons. 2. And therefore God is inquisitive; he looks for that which he fain would never find: God sets spies upon us; he looks upon us himself through the Curtains of a cloud, and he fends Angels to espie us in all our ways, and permits the Devil to winnow us and to accuse us, and erect a Tribunal and witnesses in our own Consciences, and he cannot want information concerning our smallest irregularities. Sometimes the Devil accuses: but he sometimes accuses us fallly, either maliciously, or ignorantly, and we stand upright in that particular by innocence; and sometimes by penitence; and all this while our Conscience is our friend. Sometimes our Conscience does accuse us unto God; and then we stand convict by our own judgement. Sometimes, if our Conscience acquit us, yet me are not thereby justified: For, as Moses accused the Jews ; so do Christ and his Apostles accuse us, not in their persons, but by their works and by their words, by the thing it felf, by confronting the laws of Christ, and our practices. Sometimes the Angels, who are the observers of all our works, carry up fad tydings to the Court of Heaven against us. Thus two Angels were the informers against sodom: but yet these were the last; for before that time the cry of their iniquity had sounded loud and fadly in Heaven. And all this is the direct and proper effect of his Jealousie, which sets spies upon all the actions, and watches the circumstances, and tells the steps, and attends the business, the recreations, the publications and retirements of every man, and will not suffer a thought to wander, but he uses means to correct its error, and to reduce it to himself. For he that created us, and daily feeds us, he that intreats us to be happy, with an importunity fo passionate as if (not we, but himself were to receive the favour; he that would part with his only Son from his bolom, and the embraces of eternity, and give him over to a shameful and cursed death for us, cannot but be supposed to love us with a great love, and to own us with an entire title, and therefore that he would fain secure us to himself with an undivided passion. And it cannot but be infinitely reasonable: for to whom else should any of us belong

II.

Delong but to God? Did the World create us? or did Lust ever do us SERM. any good? Did Satan ever suffer one stripe for our advantage? Does not he study all the ways to ruine us? Do the Sun or the Stars preserve us alive? or do we get understanding from the Angels? Did ever any joynt of our body knit, or our heart ever keep one true minute of a pulse without God? Had we not been either nothing, or worse, that is, infinitely, eternally miserable, but that God made us capable, and then pursued us with arts and devices of great mercy to force us, to be happy? Great reason therefore there is that God should be jealous lest we take any of our duty from him, who hath so strangely deserved it all, and give it to a creature, or to our enemy, who cannot be capable of any. But however, it will concern us with much caution to observe our own ways, fince we are made a spectacle to God, to Angels, and to Men. God hath set fo many spies upon us, the bleffed Angels and the cursed Devils, good men and bad men, the eye of Heaven, and eye of that eye, God himself, all watching left we rob God of his Honour, and our selves of our Hopes. For by this prime intention he hath chosen so to get his own glory, as may best consist with our felicity: His great design is to be glorified in our being saved. 3. God's Jealousie hath a sadder effect than all this. For all this is for mercy; but if we provoke this Jealousie, if he finds us in our spiritual whoredoms, he is implacable, that is, he is angry with us to eternity, unless we return in time : and if we do, it may be he will not be appealed in all instances; and when he forgives us, he will make some reserves of his wrath; he will punish our persons or our estate, he will chastise us at home or abroad, in our bodies or in our children; for he will visit our sins upon our children from generation to generation: and if they be made milerable for our fins, they are unhappy in such parents; but we bear the curse and anger of God, even while they bear his rod. God visits the fins of the Fathers upon the children.] That's the second great stroke he strikes against sin, and is now to be considered.

That God doth so is certain, because he saith he doth: and that this is just in him so to do, is also as certain, therefore because he doth it. For as his Laws are our measures, so his actions and his own will are his own measures. He that hath right over all things, and all persons cannot do wrong to any thing. He that is effentially just, (and there could be no fuch thing as Justice, or Justice it self could not be good, if it did not derive from him)it is impossible for him to be unjust. But since God is pleased to speak after the manner of men, it may well consist with our duty to enquire into those manners of consideration whereby we may understand the Equity of God in this proceeding, and to be instructed

also in our own danger if we persevere in sin.

1. No man is made a sinner by the fault of another man without his own consent: For to every one God gives his choice, and fets life and death before every of the sons of Adam: and therefore this death is not a consequent to any fin but our own. In this sence it is true, that if the fathers eat somre grapes, the childrens teeth shall not be set on edge: and therefore the fin of Adam, which was derived to all the world, did not bring the world to any other death but temporal, by the intermedial stages of sickness and temporal infelicities. And it is not said that sin passed upon all men, but Death; and that also no otherwise but εφ' ωπάντες ημαφίον, in asmuch as all men have sinned; as they have followed the steps of their father, so they are partakers of this death. And therefore it is very remarkable, that Death brought in by Sin was nothing superinduced

to man; man only was reduced to his own natural condition, from which before Adam's Fall he stood exempted by supernatural favour; and there- SER M. fore although the taking away that extraordinary grace or priviledge was a punishment; yet the suffering the natural death was directly none, but a condition of his Creation, natural, and therefore not primarily evil; but if not good, yet at least indifferent. And the truth and purpose of this observation will extend it self, if we observe, that before any man died Christ was promised, by whom Death was to lose its sting, by whom Death did cease to be an evil, and was, or might be, if we do belong to Christ, a state of advantage. So that we by occasion of Adam's sin, being returned to our natural certainty of dying, do still even in this very particular stand between the blessing and the cursing. If we follow Christ, Death is our friend: If we imitate the prevarication of Adam, then Death becomes an evil; the condition of our Nature becomes the punishment of our own sin, not of Adam's. For although his sin brought Death in, yet it is only our fin that makes Death to be evil. And I desire this to be observed, because it is of great use in vindicating the Divine Justice in the matter of this question. The material part of the evil came from our Father upon us; but the formality of it, the sting and the curse is only by our felves.

2. For the fault of others many may become miserable, even all or any of those whose relation is such to the sinner, that he in any sence may by fuch inflictions be punished, execrable, or oppressed. Indeed it were strange, if when a Plague were in Æthiopia, the Athenians should be infected; or if the house of Pericles were visited, Thucydides should die for it. For although there are some evils which (as Plutarch faith) are ansis & propagationibus prædita, incredibili celeritate in longingnum penetrantia, fuch which can dart evil influences, as Porcupines do their quills; yet as at so great distances the knowledge of any confederate events must needs be uncertain; so it is also useless, because we neither can joyn their causes, nor their circumstances, nor their accidents into any neighbourhood of conjunction. Relations are seldom noted at such distances; and if they were, it is certain, so many accidents will intervene, that will out-weigh the efficacy of such relations, that by any so far distant events we cannot be instructed in any duty, nor understand our selves reproved for any fault. But when the relation is nearer, and is joyned under such a head and common cause, that the influence is perceived, and the parts of it do usually communicate in benefit, notices, or infelicity, (especially if they relate to each other as superiour and inferiour) then it is certain the fin is infectious (I mean) not only in example, but also in punishment.

And of this I shall shew, I. In what instances usually it is so. 2. For what reasons it is so, and justly so. 3. In what degree, and in what cases it is fo. 4. What remedies there are for this evil.

1. It is fo in Kingdoms, in Churches, in Families, in political, artifi-

cial, and even in accidental Societies.

When David numbred the people, God was angry with him; but he punished the people for the crime; seventy thousand men died of the Plague. And when God gave to David the choice of three plagues, he chose that of the Pestilence, in which the meanest of the people, and fuch which have the least society with the acts and crimes of Kings, are most commonly devoured; whilst the powerful and sinning persons, by arts of Physick, and slight, by provisions of nature, and accidents, are more commonly secured. * But the story of the Kings of Israel hath Ш.

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2 Sam.21.1.

1 King. 21.29.

furnished us with an example fitted with all the stranger circumstances SER M. in this question. Joshua had sworn to the Gibeonites (who had craftily secured their lives by exchanging it for their liberties :) Almost 500 years after, Saul, in zeal to the men of Israel and Judah, slew many of them. After this Saul dies, and no question was made of it. But in the days of David there was a Famine in the Land three years together; and God being inquired of, faid, it was because of Saul his killing the Gibeonites. What had the people to do with their King's fault? or, at least, the people of David with the fault of Sanl? That we shall see anon. But see the way that was appointed to expiate the crime and the calamity. David took seven of Saul's sons, and hanged them up against the Sun; and after that God was intreated for the Land. The story observes one circumstance more: that for the kindness of Jonathan, David spared Mephibosheth. Now this story doth not only instance in Kingdoms, but in Families too. The Father's fault is punished upon the sons of the Family, and the King's fault upon the people of his Land; even after the death of the King, after the death of the Father. Thus God vifited the fin of Ahab partly upon himself, partly upon his sons. I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his sons days will I bring the evil upon his House. Thus did God flay the child of Bathsheba for the sin of his father David: and the wholeFamily of Eli, all his kindred of the nearer lines, were thrust from the Priesthood, and a curse made to descend upon his children for many ages, that all the males should die young, and in the slower of their youth. The boldness and impiety of Cham made his posterity to be accurred, and brought slavery into the world. Because Amalek fought with the sons of Israel at Rephidim, God took up a quarrel against the Nation for ever. And above all examples is that of the Jews, who put to death the Lord of life, and made their Nation to be an Anathema for ever, until the day of restitution: His blond be upon us, and upon our children. If we thed innocent bloud, if we provoke God to wrath, if we oppress the poor, if we crucifie the Lord of life again, and put him to an open shame, the wrath of God will be upon us and upon our children, to make us a curfed Family; and we are the finners, to be the stock and original of the curse; the pedigree of the misery shall derive from us.

This last instance went farther than the other of Families and Kingdoms. For not only the fingle Families of the Jews were made miserable for their fachers murthering the Lord of Life, nor also was the Nation alone extinguished for the fins of their Rulers, but the Religion was removed; it ceased to be God's people; the Synagogue was rejected, and her veil rent, and her privacies dismantled, and the Gentiles were made to be God's people, when the Jews inclosure was dispark'd. I need not farther to instance this proposition in the case of National Churches; though it is a fad calamity that is fallen upon all the Seven Churches of Asia, (to whom the Spirit of God wrote seven Epistles by Saint John) and almost all the Churches of Africa, where Christ was worthipped, and now Mahomet is thrust in substitution, and the people are servants, and the Religion is extinguished, or where it remains it thines like the Moon in an Eclipse, or like the least spark of the Pleiades, seen but seldom, and that rather shining like a Glo-worm than a Taper enkindled with a beam of the Sun of Righteousnels. I shall add no more instances to verifie the truth of this, fave only I shall observe to you, that even there is danger in being in evil company, in suspected places, in the civil societies and

fellowship of wicked men.

Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum Vulgarit arcanæ, sub iisdem Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum Solvat phaselum. Sæpe Diespiter Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum. SERM.
III.

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And it hapned to the Mariners who carried Jonah, to be in danger with a horrid Storm, because Jonah was there who had sinned against the Lord. Many times the sin of one man is punished by the falling of a House or a Wall upon him, and then all the Family are like to be crushed with the same ruine: so dangerous, so pestilential, so infectious a thing is Sin, that it scatters the poison of its breath to all the neighborhood, & makes that the man ought to be avoided like a person infected with the Plague.

Next I am'to consider Why this is so, and Why it is justly so. To this I answer, r. Between Kings and their people, Parents and their children, there is fo great a necessitude, propriety, and entercourse of nature, dominion, right and possession, that they are by God and the Laws of Nations reckoned as their Goods and their Bleffings. The honor of a King is in the multitude of his people; and, Children are a gift that cometh of the Lord; and, Happy is that man that hath his quiver full of them: and, Lo thus shall the man be bleffed that feareth the Lord ; his wife shall be like the fruitful vine by the walls of his house, his children like olive branches round about his Table. Now if Children be a bleffing, then to take them away in anger is a curse:and if the loss of Flocks and Herds, the burning of Houses, the blafting of Fields be a curse; how much greater is it to lose our Children, and to see God slay them before our eyes, in hatred to our persons, and detellation and loathing of our basenes? When Job's Messengers told him the fad stories of fire from Heaven, the burning his Sheep, and that the Sabeanshad driven his Oxen away, and the Caldeans had stoln his Camels; these were sad arrests to his troubled Spirit: but it was reserved as the last blow of that sad execution, that the ruines of a House had crush'd his Sons and Daughters to their graves. Sons and Daughters are greater bleffings than Sheep and Oxen: they are not servants of profit, as Sheep are, but they secure greater ends of bleffing; they preserve your Names; they are so many titles of Provision and Providence; every new Child is a new title of God's care of that Family: They serve the ends of honour of Commonwealths and Kingdoms; they are images of our Souls, and images of God, and therefore are great bleffings; and by consequence, they are great riches, though they are not to be fold for money: and surely he that hath a Cabinet of invaluable Jewels, will think himself rich, though he never sells them. Does God take care for Oxen? (said our blessed Saviour) much more for your yea all and every one of your Children are of more value than many Oxen. When therefore God for your fins strikes them with crookedness, with deformity, with foolishness, with impertinent and caitive spirits, with hasty or sudden deaths; it is a greater curse to you than to lose whole Herds of Cattel, of which (it is certain) most men would be very sensible. They are our goods; they are our bleffings from God; therefore we are stricken when for our sakes they die. Therefore we may properly be punished by evils happening to our Relatives.

2. But as this is a punishment to us, so it is not unjust as to them, thought they be innocent. For all the calamities in this life are incident to the most Godly persons in the world: and since the King of Heaven and earth was made a man of sorrows, it cannot be called unjust or intolerable that innocent persons should be pressed with temporal infelicities: only in

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fuch cases we must distinguish the misery from the punishment; for that all the world dies is a punishment of Adam's sin; but it is no evil to those single persons that die in the Lord, for they are blessed in their death. Jonathan was killed the same day with his Father the King; and this was a punishment to Saul indeed, but to Jonathan it was a blessing: for since God had appointed the Kingdom to his neighbour, it was more honourable for him to die sighting the Lord's Battel, than to live and see himself the lasting testimony of God's Curse upon his Father, who lost the Kingdom from his Family by his disobedience. That death is a blessing which ends an honourable, and prevents an inglorious life. And our children (it may be) shall be sanctified by a sorrow, and purified by the fire of assistant as they shall receive the blessing of it; but it is to their fathers acurse, who shall wound their own hearts with sorrow, & cover their heads with a robe of shame, for bringing so great evil upon their house.

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3. God hath many ends of Providence to serve in this dispensation of his Judgments. * 1. He expresses the highest indignation against sin, and makes his examples lasting, communicative, and of great effect; it is a little image of Hell; and we shall the less wonder that God with the pains of Eternity punishes the sins of Time, when with our eyes we see him punish a transient action with a lasting Judgment. *2. It arrests the spirits of men, and surprizes their loosnesses, and restrains their gaiety, when we observe that the Judgments of God find us out in all relations, and turn our comforts into sadness, and make our Families the scene of forrows, and we can escape him no where; and by fin are made obnoxious not alone to personal judgments, but are made like the fountains of the Dead Sea, springs of the Lake of sodom; in stead of refreshing our Families with blessings, we leave them brimstone, and drought, and poison, and an evil name, and the wrath of God, and a treasure of wrath, and their Fathers fins, for their portion and inheritance. * Naturalists fay, that when the leading Goats in the Greek Islands have taken an Eryngus or Sea-Holly into their mouths, all the Herd will stand still, till the Herds-man comes and forces it out, as apprehending the evil that will come to them all, if any of them, especially their Principals, taste an unwholfom Plant. And indeed it is of a general concernment, that the Master of a Family, or the Prince of a People, from whom as from a fountain many issues do derive upon their Relatives, should be springs of Health, and Sanctity, and Bleffing. It is a great right and propriety that a King hath in his People, or a Father in his Children, that even their fins can do these a mischief, not only by a direct violence, but by the execution of God's wrath. God hath made strange bands and veffels, or chanels of communication between them, when even the anger of God shall be conveyed by the conduits of such Relations. That would be considered. It binds them nearer than our new doctrine will endure. But it also binds us to pray for them, and for their Holiness, and good Government, as earnestly as we would to be delivered from death, or fickness, or poverty, or war, or the wrath of God in any instance. 3. This also will satisfie the fearfulness of such persons who think the evil profperous, and call the proud Happy. No man can be called happy till he be dead; nor then neither, if he lived vitiously. Look how God handles him in his Children, in his Family, in his Grand-children: and as it tells that generation which sees the Judgment, that God was all the while angry with him; so it supports the spirits of men in the interval, and entertains them with the expectation of a certain hope: for if I do not live to see his sin punished, yet his posterity may find themfelves

3.

felves accurfed, and feel their fathers fins in their own calamity; and the expectation or belief of that may relieve my oppression, and ease my SERM. forrows, while I know that God will bear my injury in a lasting record, and, when I have forgot it, will bring it forth to judgment. The Athenians were highly pleased when they saw honours done to the posteri-ty of Cimon [a good man, and a rare Citizen, but murthered for being wise and vertuous:] and when at the same time they saw a decree of Banishment passagainst the children of Lacharis and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouths, and with filence did admire the justice of the Power above.

The summ of this is; that in sending evils upon the posterity of evil men, God serves many ends of Providence, some of Wisdom, some of Mercy, some of Justice, and contradicts none. For the evil of the innocent son is the father's punishment upon the stock of his sin, and his relation; but the sad accident happens to the son upon the score of nature, and many ends of providence and mercy. To which I add, that if any, even the greatest temporal evil may fall upon a man, [as Blindness did upon the blind man in the Gospel] when neither he nor his Parents have sinned; much more may it do so when his Parents have, though he have not. For there is a nearer or more visible commensuration of Justice. between the Parents sin and the Sons sickness, than between the evil of the Son and the innocence of Father and Son together. The dispensation therefore is righteous and severe:

3. I am now to consider in what Degree and in what cases this is usual, or to be expected. It is in the Text instanced in the matter of worshiping Images. God is so jealous of his Honour, that he will not suffer an Image of himself to be made, lest the image dishonour the substance; nor any Image of a Creature to be worlhipped, though with a less honor, lest that less swell up into a greater. And he that is thus jealous of his honour, and therefore so instances it, is also very curious of it in all other particulars: and though to punish the sins of fathers upon the children be more solemnly threatned in this sin only, yet we find it inslicted indifferently in any other great fin, as appears in the former precedents.

This one thing I desire to be strictly observed; That it is with much error and great indiligence usually taught in this Question, that the wrath of God descends from fathers to children only in case the children imitate and write after their fathers copyssupposing these words of them that hate me to relate to the children. But this is exprelly against the words of the Text, and the examples of the thing. God afflicts good children of evil parents for their fathers sins; and the words are plain and determinate, God visits the sins of the fathers in tertiam & quartam generationemeorum qui oderunt me, to the third generation of them, of those fathers that hate me; that is, upon the great-grand-children of such parents. So that if the great-grandfathers be haters of God and lovers of iniquity, it may entail a curse upon so many generations, though the children be haters of their fathers hatred, and lovers of God. *And this hath been observed even by wise men among the Heathens, whose stories tell, that Antigonus was punished for the tyranny of his father Demetrius, Phyleus for his father Angeas, pious and wise Nestor for his father Neleus:

And it was so in the case of Jonathan, who lost the Kingdom and his life upon the stock of his father's sins; and the innocent child of David was flain by the anger of God, not against the child, who never had deserved it, but the father's Adultery. I need not here repeat what I said in vindication of the Divine Justice; but I observed this, to

represent the danger of a sinning father or mother, when it shall so in-SERM. fect the family with curses, that it shall ruine a wife and an innocent fon; and that vertue and innocence which shall by God be accepted as fufficient through the Divine mercy to bring the fon to Heaven, yet it may be shall not be accepted to quit him from feeling the curse of his father's crime in a load of temporal infelicities; And who but a villain would ruine and undo a wife, a vertuous, and his own fon? But so it is in all the world. A Traitor is condemned to fuffer death himself, and his posterity are made beggars and dishonourable: his Escutcheon is reversed, his arms of honour are extinguished, the nobleness of his Ancestours is forgotten; but his own sin is not, while men by the characters of infamy are taught to call that Family accurred which had so base a father. Tiresias was esteemed unfortunate, because he could not see his friends and children: the poor man was blind with age. But Athamas and Agave were more miserable, who did see their children, but took them for Lions and Stags: the parents were miserably frantick. But of all, they deplored the misery of Hercules, who, when he saw his children, took them for enemies, and endeavoured to destroy them. And this is the case of all vitious parents. That a mans enemies were they of his own house, was accounted a great calamity: but it is worse, when we love them tenderly and fondly, and yet do them all the despite we wish to enemies. But so it is, that in many cases we do more mischief to our children, than if we should strangle them when they are newly taken from their mother's knees, or tear them in pieces as Medea did her brother Abstras. For to leave them to inherit a Curse, to leave them to an entail'd calamity, a misery, a disease, the wrath of God, for an inheritance, that it may descend upon them, and remark the Family like their Coat of arms; is to be the parent of evil, the ruine of our Family, the causes of mischief to them who ought to be dearer to us than our own eyes. And let us remember this when we are tempted to provoke the jealous God; let us consider that his anger hath a progeny, and a descending line, and it may break out in the days of our Nephews. A Greek woman was accused of Adultery, because she brought forth a Blackmoor; and could not acquit her self, till she had proved that she had descended in the fourth degree from an Athiopian: Her Great-grandfather was a Moor. And if Naturalists say true, that Nephews are very often liker to their Grand-fathers than to their Fathers; we see that the femblance of our Souls and the character of the person is conveyed by fecret and undifcernable conveyances. Natural production conveys Original fin;and therefore, by the chanels of the body, it is not strange that men convey an hereditary fin. And luftful fons are usually born to Satyrs; and monsters of intemperance to the Drunkards: and there are also hereditary Diseases; which if in the fathers they were effects of their sin, as it is in many cases, it is notorious that the father's sin is punished, and the punishment conveyed by natural instruments. So that it cannot be a wonder, but it ought to be a huge affrightment from a state of sin; if a man can be capable of so much charity as to love himself in his own person, or in the images of his nature, and heirs of his fortunes, and the supports of his family, in the children that God hath given him. Consider therefore that you do not only act your own tragedies when you sin, but you represent and effect the fortune of your children, you slay them with your own barbarous and inhumane hands. Only be pleafed to compare the variety of estates, of your own and your children. If they on earth be miserable many times for their fathers sins, how

great a state of misery is that in Hell which they suffer for their own? And how vile a person is that father or mother, who for a little mony, or SER M. to please a lust, will be a parricide, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children?

SERMONIV.

PART II.

Am to consider what Remedies there are for sons to cut off this Entail of Curses; and whether, and by what means it is possible for fons to prevent the being punished for their fathers fins. And fince this thing is so perplext and intricate, hath so easie an objection, and so hard an answer, looks so like a cruelty, and so unlike a Justice. (though it be infinitely just, and very severe, and a huge enemy to sin;) it cannot be thought but that there are not only ways left to reconcile God's proceeding to the strict rules of Justice, but also the condition of man to the possibilities of God's usual mercies. One said of old, Ex tarditate st Dii sontes pratereant, & insontes pletant, Justitiam suam non ste rette resarciunt: If God be so slow to punish the guilty, that the punish-ment be deferred till the death of the guilty person; and that God shall be forced to punish the innocent, or let the sin quite escape unpunish'd; it will be something hard to joyn that Justice with Mercy, or to joyn that action with Justice. Indeed it will seem strange, but the reason of its Justice I have already discoursed: If now we can find how to reconcile this to God's Mercy too, or can learn how it may be turned into a Mercy, we need to take no other care, but that for our own particular we take heed we never tempt God's anger upon our families, and that by competent and apt instruments we endeavour to cancel the decree, if it be gone out against our Families; for then we make use of that severity which God intended; and our selves shall be refreshed in the shades, and by the cooling brooks of the Divine Mercy, even then when we fee the wrath of God breaking out upon the families round about us.

First, The first means to cut off the Entail of wrath and Cursings from a Family is, for the fons to disavow those signal actions of impiety in which their fathers were deeply guilty, and by which they stained great parts of their life, or have done something of very great unworthing. ness and disreputation. Si quis paterni vitii naseitur beres,nascitur & pene: The heir of his father's wickedness, is the heir of his father's Curie. And a fon comes to inherit a wickedness from his father, three ways

1. By approving, or any ways consenting to his fathers sin: As by speaking of it without regret or shame; by pleasing himself in the story; or by having an evil mind, apt to counsel or do the like, if the same circumstances should occurr. For a son may contract a sin, not onely by derivation and the contagion of example, but by approbation; not only by a corporal, but by a virtual contact; not only by transcribing an evil copy, but by commending it : and a man may have animum leprosum in cute munda, a leprous and a polluted mind even for nothing, even for an emptyand ineffective lust. An evil mind may contract the curse of an evil action. And though the son of a covetous father prove a prodigal; yet if he loves his fathers vice for ministring to his vanity, he

is disposed not only to a judgment for his own prodigality, but also to SERM. the curse of his father's avarice.

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2. The son may inherit the father's wickedness by imitation and direct practice; and then the Curse is like to come to purpose; a curse by accumulation, a treasure of wrath: and then the children, as they arrive to the height of wickedness by a speedy passage, as being thurst forward by an active example, by countenance, by education, by a feldom restraint, by a remiss discipline; so they ascertain a Curse to the family, by being a perverse Generation, a family set up in opposition against God, by continuing and increasing the provocation.

3. Sons inherit their fathers crimes by receiving and enjoying the purchases of their rapine, injustice and oppression, by rising upon the ruine of their fathers fouls, by fitting warm in the furrs which their fathers stole, and walking in the grounds which are water'd with the tears of oppressed Orphans and Widows. Now in all these cases the rule holds, If the son inherits the sin, he cannot call it unjust, if he inherits also his fathers punishment. But to rescind the fatal chain, & break in sunder the line of God's anger, a son is tied in all these cases to disavow his father's crime. But because the cases are several, he must also in several manners do it.

1. Every man is bound not to glory in or speak honour of the powerful and unjust actions of his Ancestors: But as all the sons of Adam are bound to be ashamed of that original stain which they derived from the loins of their abused Father, they must be humbled in it, they must deplore it as an evil Mother, and a troublesome daughter; so must children account it amongst the crosses of their Family, and the stains of their honour, that they pass'd through so impure chanels, that in the sense of morality as well as nature they can say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to rottenness, Thou art my mother. I do not say that sons are bound to publish or declaim against their fathers crimes, and to speak of their shame in Piazza's and before Tribunals; that indeed were a fure way to bring their fathers fins upon their own heads, by their own faults. No:like Sem and Japhet, they must go backward, and cast a veil upon their nakedness and shame, lest they bring the curse of their fathers angry dishonour upon their own impious and unrelenting heads. Noah's Drunkenness fell upon Cham's head, because he did not hide the openness of his father's follies: he made his father ridiculous; but did not endeavour either to amend the fin, or to wrap the dishonour in a pious covering. He that goes to disavow his father's fin by publishing his shame, hides an ill face with a more ugly vizor, and endeavours by torches and phantastick lights to quench the burning of that house which his father set on fire: These fires are to be smothered, and so extinguished. I deny not but it may become the piety of a child to tell a sad story, to mourn, and represent a real grief for so great a misery as is a wicked father or mother: but this is to be done with a tenderness as nice as we would dress an eye withal; it must be only with designs of charity, of counsel, of ease, and with much prudence, and a sad spirit. These things being secured, that which in this case remains, is, that with all entercourses between God and our selves we disavow the crime.

Children are bound to pray to God to fanctifie, to cure, to forgive their parents: and even concerning the fins of our forefathers the Church hath taught us in her Litanies, to pray that God would be pleased to forgive them, so that neither we nor they may sink under the wrath of God for them. [Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins:]Ours in common and conjunction. And David confessed to God, and humbled himself for the sins of

his Ancestors and Decessors: Our fathers have done amiss, and dealt wickedly, neither kept they thy great goodness in remembrance, but were disobedient SERM. at the Sea, even at the Red Sea. So did good King Josiah; Great is the wrath of the Lord which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkned unto the words of this book. But this is to be done between God and our selves: or if in publick, then to be done by general accusation; that 2 King, 22.13. God only may read our particular forrows in the fingle shame of our Families registred in our hearts, and represented to him with humiliati-

on, shame, and a hearty prayer.

2. Those Curses which descend from the Fathers to the children by imitation of the crimes of their progenitors are to be cut off by special and personal repentance and prayer, as being a state directly opposite to that which procured the Curse: And if the sons be pious, or return to an early and a severe course of holy living, they are to be remedied as other innocent and pious persons are, who are sufferers under the burthens of their Relatives, whom I shall consider by and by. Only observe this; that no publick or imaginative dilavowings, no ceremonial and pompous rescission of our Fathers crimes, can be sufficient to interrupt the succession of the Curse, if the children do secretly practise or approve what they in pretence or ceremony disavow. And this is clearly proved, (and it will help to explicate that difficult saying of our Blessed Saviour) Wo untoyou, for ye build the sepulchres of the Prophets, and your Fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for 47,48. they killed them, and ye build their sepulchres: that is, the Pharisees were huge Hypocrites, and adorned the Monuments of the Martyr-Prophets, and in words disclaim'd their sethers in his in deeds and design there and in words disclaim'd their Fathers sin, but in deeds and design they approved it. 1. Because they secretly wish'd all such persons dead; colebant mortuos quos nollent superstites. In charity to themselves some men wish their enemies in Heaven, and would be at charges for a monument for them, that their malice, and their power, and their bones might rest in the same grave: and yet that wish and that expence is no teltimony of their Charity, but of their Anger. 2. These men were willing that the Monuments of those Prophets should remain, and be a visible affrightment to all such bold persons and severe reprehenders as they were; and therefore they builded their Sepulchres to be as Beacons and publications of danger to all honest Preachers. And this was the account Saint Chrysostome gave of the place. 3. To which also the circumstances of the place concurr. For they only said, If they had lived Mat. 23.30. in their Fathers days they would not have done as they did; but it is certain they approved it, because they pursued the same courses: and therefore our Blessed Saviour calls them prear amouselessour, not only the children of them that did kill the Prophets, but a killing generation; the fin also descends upon you, for ye have the same killing mind: and although you honour them that are dead,& cannot shame you, yet you design the same ulages against them that are alive, even against the Lord of the Prophets, against Christ himself, whom ye will kill. And as Dion said of Caracalla, πάπ τοις αραθοίς ανδιεαν αχθόμερμος, πμάν πνας αυτών απιθανόντας επλά ή είο, The man was troublesom to all good men when they were alive, but did them honor when they were dead: & when Herod had killed Aristobulus, yet he made him a most magnificent funeral: So because the Pharifees were of the same humour, therefore our blessed Saviour bids them to fill up the measure of verse 32. their Fathers iniquity; for they still continued the malice, only they painted it over with a pretence of piety, and of disavowing their Fathers fin; which if they had done really, their being children of persecutors,

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SERM. just cause of a wo from Christ; this being an act of piety, and the other of nature, inevitable and not chosen by them, and therefore not chargeable upon them. He therefore that will to real purposes disavow his fathers crimes, must do it heartily and humbly and charitably, and throw off all affections to the like actions. For he that finds fault with his father for killing Isaiah or Jeremy, and himself shall kill Aristobulus and John the Baptist; he that is angry because the old Prophets were murthered, and shall imprison and beggar and destroy the new ones; he that disavows the persecution in the Primitive times, and honours the memory of the dead Martyrs, & yet every day makes new ones; he that blames the oppression of the Country by any of his predeceffors, & yet shall continue to oppress his Tenants, and all that are within his gripe; that man cannot hope to be eased from the curse of his fathers sins; He goes on to imitate them, and therefore to fill up their measure, and to heap up a full treasure of wrath.

3. But concerning the third there is yet more difficulty. Those sons that inherit their Fathers fins by possessing the price of their Fathers fouls, that is, by enjoying the goods gotten by their Fathers rapine, may certainly quit the inheritance of the curle, if they quit the purchase of the sin, that is, if they pay their Fathers Debts; his debts of contract, and his debts of justice; his debts of entercourse, and his debts of oppressions I do not say that every man is bound to restore all the Land which his Ancestors have unjustly snatched: for when by Law the possession is established, though the Grand-father entred like a Thief, yet the Grandchild is bona fidei passessor, and may enjoy it justly. And the reasons of this are great and necessary: for the avoiding eternal Suits, and perpetual diseases of rest and conscience; because there is no Estate in the World that could be enjoyed by any man honestly, if posterity were bound to make restitution of all the wrongs done by their progenitors. But although the children of the far-removed lines are not obliged to restitution, yet others are : and some for the same, some for other reasons.

1. Sons are tied to restore what their Fathers did usurp, or to make agreement and an acceptable recompence for it, if the case be visible, evident and notorious, and the oppressed party demands it : because in this case the Law hath not settled the possession in the new Tenant; or if a Judge hath, it is by injury; and there is yet no collateral accidental Title transferred by long possession, as it is in other cases: and therefore if the Son continues to oppress the same person whom his Father first injured, he may well expect to be the heir of his Father's Curse, as well as of his curled purchase.

2. Whether by Law and Justice, or not, the person be obliged, nay, although by all the folemnities of Law the unjust purchase be established, and that in conscience the Grand-children be not obliged to restitution in their own particulars, but may continue to enjoy it without a new fin; yet if we see a Curse descending upon the Family for the old oppression done in the days of our Grand-sathers, or if we probably suspect that to be the cause; then, if we make restitution, we also most certainly remove the Curse, because we take away the matter upon which the Curse is grounded. I do not say, we sin, if we do not restore: but that, if we do not, we may still be punished. The reason of this is clear and visible: For as without our faults, in many cases, we may enjoy those Lands which our forefathers got unjustly; so without our faults we may be punished for them. For as they have transmitted the benefit to us, it is but reasonable we should suffer the appendant calamity. If we receive

good,

good, we must also venture the evil that comes along with it. Res transit cum (no onere: All Lands and Possessions pass with their proper burthens. SE R M. And if any of my Ancestors was a Tenant, and a Servant, and held his Lands as a Villain to his Lord; his posterity also must do so, though accidentally they become Noble. The case is the same: If my Ancestors entred unjustly, there is a curse and a plague that is due to that oppression and injustice; and that is the burthen of the Land, and it descends all along with it. And although I by the consent of Laws am a just possessor, yet I am obliged to the burthen that comes with the Land: I am indeed another kind of person than my Grand-father; he was an usurper, but I am a just possessor; but because in respect of the Land this was but an accidental change, therefore I still am liable to the burthen, and the curse that descends with it. But the way to take off the Curse is to quit the Title; and yet a man may chuse. It may be, to lose the Land would be the bigger curse: but if it be not, the way is certain how you may be rid of it. * There was a custom among the Greeks, that the children of them that died of Consumptions or Dropsies, all the while their Fathers bodies, were burning in their funeral piles, did fit with their feet in cold water, hoping that such a lustration and ceremony would take off the lineal and descending contagion from the children. I know not what cure they found by their superstition: but we may be sure, that if we wash (not our feet, but) our hands of all the unjust purchases which our Fathers have transmitted to us, their hydropick thirst of Wealth shall not transmit to us a consumption of estate, or any other curse. But this remedy is only in the matter of injury or oppression, not in the case of other sins: because other sins were transient; and as the guilt did not pass upon the children, so neither did the exteriour and permanent effect: and therefore in other fins (in case they do derive a curse)it cannot be removed, as in the matter of unjust possession it may be; whose effect (we may so order it) shall no more stick to us than the guilt of our Fathers personal actions.

The sum is this: As Kingdoms use to expiate the faults of others by acts of Justice; and as Churches use to remove the accursed thing from sticking to the communities of the faithful, and the fins of Christians from being required of the whole Congregation, by excommunicating and censuring the delinquent persons: so the Heirs and Sons of Families are to remove from their House the Curse descending from their Fathers loyns, By 1, Acts of disavowing the fins of their Ancestors; 2. By praying for pardon; 3. By being humbled for them; 4. By renouncing the example; and 5. Quitting the affection to the crimes; 6. By not imitating the actions in kind, or in semblance and similitude; and lastly, 7. By reluting to rejoyce in the ungodly purchases in which their Fathers did amiss and dealt wickedly.

Secondly, But after all this, many cases do occur in which we find that innocent sons are punished. The remedies I have already discoursed of are for such children who have in some manner or other contracted and derived the fin upon themselves : But if we inquire how those sons who have no entercourse or affinity with their Fathers sins, or whose Fathers sins were so transient that no benefit or effect did pass upon their posterity, how they may prevent or take off the Curse that lies upon the Family for their Fathers faults 3 this will have some distinct

confiderations.

1. The pious children of evil Parents are to stand firm upon the confidence of the Divine grace and mercy, and upon that perswasion to begin

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to work upon a new stock. For it is as certain that he may derive a bleffing upon his Posterity, as that his Parents could transmit a curse: and if any man by Piety should procure God's favour to his Relatives and Children, it is certain that he hath done more than to escape the punishment of his Father's follies. If fin doth abound, and evils by fin are derived from his Parents; much more shall grace superabound, and mercy by grace. If he was in danger from the crimes of others, much rather shall he be secured by his own Piety. For if God punishes the fins of the fathers to four generations; yet he rewards the Piety of fathers to ten, to hundreds, and to thousands. Many of the Ancestors of Abraham were persons not noted for Religion, but suffered in the publick impiety and almost universal idolatry of their Ages: and yet all the evils that could thence descend upon the Family were wiped off; and God began to reckon with Abraham upon a new stock of Bleffings and Piety; and he was, under God, the Original of fo great a Blessing, that his Family for 1500 years together had from him a title to many favours; and what-ever evils did chance to them in the descending Ages, were but single evils in respect of that treasure of mercies which the Fathers Piety had obtained to the whole Nation. And it is remarkable to observe, how bleffings did stick to them for their Fathers fakes, even whether they would or no. For first, his Grand-child Esau proved a naughty man, and he lost the great Blessing which was entailed upon the Family; but he got, not a curse, but a less Blessing: and yet because he lost the greater Blessing, God excluded him from being reckoned in the elder line; for God, foreseeing the event, so ordered it, that he should first lose his birth-right, and then lose the bleffing; for it was to be certain, the Family must be reckoned for prosperous in the proper line:and yet God bleffed Esan into a great Nation, and made him the father of many Princes. Now the line of bleffing being reckoned in Jacob, God bleffed his family strangely, and by miracle, for almost five generations. He brought them from Egypt by mighty figns and wonders: and when for fin they all died in their way to Canaan, two only excepted; God so ordered it, that they were all reckoned as single deaths; the Nation still descended like a river whose waters were drunk up for the beverage of an army, but still it keeps its name and current, and the waters are supplied by showers, and springs, and providence. After this, iniquity still increased, and then God struck deeper, and spread curses upon whole Families; he translated the Priesthood from line to line, he removed the Kingdom from one family to another: and still they sinned worse; and then we read that God smote almost a whole Tribe; the Tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished about the matter of the Levite's Concubine: but still God remembred his promise which he made with their forefathers, and that breach was made up. After this we find a greater rupture made;and ten Tribes fell into Idolatry, and ten Tribes were carried captives into Asyria, and never came again: But still God remembred his covenant with Abraham, and left two Tribes. But they were restless in their provocation of the God of Abraham; and they also were carried captive: but still God was the God of their Fathers, and brought them back, & placed them safe, and they grew again into a Kingdom, and should have remained for every but that they killed one that was greater than Abraham, even the Mellias; and then they were rooted out, and the old Covenant cast off, and God delighted no more to be called the God of Abraham, but the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As long as God kept that relation, so long for the fathers Sakes they had a title and an inheritance to a bleffing : for so faith Saint Paul, [As touching the election, they are beloved for the Fathers fakes.]

Rom. 11, 28.

I infift the longer upon this instance, that I may remonstrate how great and how fure, and how preserving mercies a pious Father of a Family SERM. may derive upon his succeeding generations : And if we do but tread in the footsteps of our Father Abraham, we shall inherit as certain blessings. But then, I pray, add these Considerations.

2. If a great impiety, and a clamorous wickedness hath stained the honour of a Family, and discomposed its title to the Divine mercies and protection, it is not an ordinary piety that can restore this Family. An ordinary, eaven course of life, full of sweetness and innocency, will secure every fingle person in his own eternal interest: but that piety which must be a spring of blessings, and communicative to others, that must plead against the sins of their Ancestors, and begin a new bank of mercies for the Relatives; that must be a great and excellent, a very religious state of Life. A small pension will maintain a single person : but he that hath a numerous Family, and many to provide for, needs a greater providence of God, and a bigger provision for their maintenance: and a small revenue will not keep up the dignity of a great House; especially if it be charged with a great debt. And this is the very state of the present question. That piety that must be instrumental to take off the Curse imminent upon a Family, to bless a numerous posterity, to secure a fair condition to many ages, and to pay the debts of their Fathers sins, must be so large, as that, all necessary expences and duties for his own Soul being first discharged, it may be remarkable in great expressions, it may be exemplary to all the Family, it may be of universal efficacy, large in the extension of parts, deep in the intension of degrees: and then, as the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastick juice to the trunk of the tree, and from thence to the utmost branch and smallest gem that knots in the most distant part; so shall thegreat and exemplary piety of the Father of a Family not only preserve to the interest of his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickning spirit, active and communicative of a bleffing, not only to the trunk of the tree, to the body and rightly-descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives; and all that shall claim a kindred shall have a title to a bleffing. And this was the way that was prescribed to the Family of Eli, upon whom a sad curse was entailed, that there should not be an old man of the Family for ever, and that they should be beggars, and lose the office of Priesthood: by the counsel of R. Johanan, the son of Zachens, all the Family betook themselves to a great, a strict and a fevere Religion; and God was intreated to revoke his decree, to be reconciled to the Family, to reftore them to the common condition of men, from whence they stood separate by the displeasure of God against the crime of Eli, and his Sons Hophni and Phineas. This course is sure either to take off the judgment, or to change it into a bleffing; to take away. the rod, or the smart and evil of it; to convert the punishment into a mere natural or humane Chance, and that chance to the opportunity of a Vertue, and that vertue to the occasion of a Crown.

3. It is of great use for securing of Families, that every Master of a Family order his life so, that his Piety and Vertue be as communicative as is possible, that is, that he secure the Religion of his whole Family by a severe supravision and animadversion, and by cutting offall those un-profitable and hurtful branches which load the tree, and hinder the growth, and stock and disimprove the fruit, and revert evil juice to the very root it felf. Calvifine Sabinus laid out v aftiums of money upon his

Servants,

Servants to stock his house with Learned men; and brought one that ERM. could recite all Homer by heart, a second that was ready at Hesiod, a third at Pindar, and for every of the Lyricks one; having this fancy, that all that Learning was his own, and whatfoever his Servants knew made him o much the more skilful. It was noted in the man for a rich and prodigal folly: but if he had chang'd his instance, and brought none but vertuous servants into his house, he might better have reckoned his wealth upon their stock, and the piety of his family might have helped to bless him, and to have increased the treasure of the Master's vertue. Every man that would either cut off the title of an old curse, or secure a bleshing upon a new stock, must make vertue as large in the fountain as he can, that it may the sooner water all his Relatives with fruitfulness and blessings. And this was one of the things that God noted in Abraham, and bleffed his family for it and his posterity; I know that Abraham will teach his sons to fear me. When a man teaches his Family to know and fear God, then he scatters a blessing round about his habitation. And this helps to illustrate the reason of the thing, as well as to prove its certainty. We hear it spoken in our books of Religion, that the faith of the parents is imputed to their children to good purposes, and that a good Husband sanctifies an ill Wife, and a believing Wife an unbelieving Husband; and either of them makes the children to be sanctified, else they were unclean and unholy; that is, the very deligning children to the service of God is a sanctification of them; and therefore S. Hierom calls Christian children Candidatos fidei Christiana. And if this very defignation of them makes them holy, that is, acceptable to God, intitled to the promises, partakers of the Covenant, within the condition of sons; much more shall it be effectual to greater blessings, when the Parents take care that the children shall be actually pious, full of sobriety, full of Religion, then it becomes a holy house, a chosen generation, an elect family; and then there can no evil happen to them, but fuch which will bring them nearer to God: that is, no cross, but the cross of Christ; no misfortune, but that which shall lead them to felicity; and if any semblance of a curse happens in the generations, it is but like the Anathema of a facrifice; not an accursed, but a devoted thing: for so the Sacrifice upon whose neck the Priest's knife doth fall is so far from being accurfed, that it helps to get a bleffing to all that joyn in the oblation. So every misfortune that shall discompose the ease of a pious and religious Family, shall but make them fit to be presented unto God; and the rod of God shall be like the branches of fig-trees, bitter and sharp in themselves, but productive of most delicious fruit. No evil can curse the Family whose stock is pious, and whose branches are holiness to the Lord. If any leaf or any boughs shall fall untimely, God shall gather them up, and place them in his Temple, or at the foot of his Throne; and that Family must needs be bleffed, whom infelicity it felf cannot make accurfed.

4. If a Curse be seared to descend upon a Family for the fault of their Anceltors, pious sons have yet another way to secure themselves, and to withdraw the Curse from the family, or themselves from the Curse; and that is, by doing some very great and illustrious act of piety, an action in gradu beroico, (as Aristotle calls it) an heroical action. If there should happen to be one Martyr in a Family, it would reconcile the whole kindred to God, and make him, who ismore inclined to mercy than to severity, rather to be pleased with the relatives of the Martyr, than to continue to be angry with the Nephews of a deceased sinner. I cannot insist long upon this: But you may fee it proved by one great instance in the case of Phineas, who killed an unclean Prince, and turned the wrath of God from his people. He was

zeal : wherefore (saith God) Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him; even the covenant of an everlasting Priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an attonement for the children of Israel. Thus the sons of Rechab obtain d the blessing of an enduring and blessed Family, because they were most strict and Religious observers of their Fathers precepts, and kept them after his death, and abstained from wine for ever; and no temptation could invite them to taste it: for they had as great reverence to their Father's ashes, as, being children, they had to his rod and to his eyes. Thus a man may turn the wrath of God from his Family, and secure a blessing for posterity, by doing some great noble acts of Charity; or a remarkable Chastity, like that of Joseph; or an expensive, an affectionate Religion and love to Christ and his servants, as Mary Magdalen did. Such things as these which are extraordinary egressions and transvolations beyond the ordinary savour; and gives them testimony by an extraregular blessing.

One thing more I have to add by way of advice; and that is, That all Parents and Fathers of Families, from whose loyns a bleffing or a curse usually does descend, be very careful, not only generally in all the actions of their lives, (for that I have already pressed) but particularly in the matter of Repentance; that they be curions that they finish it, and do it throughly: for there are certain ύσεφήματα μετανοίας, leavings of Repentance, which make that God's anger is taken from us so imperfectly: And although God, for his sake who died for us, will pardon a returning sinner, and bridg him to Heaven through tribulation and a fiery trial; yet when a man is weary of his forrow, and his Fastings are a load to him, and his sins are not so perfectly renounced, or hated as they ought, the parts of Repentance which are left unfinished do sometimes fall upon the heads or upon the fortunes of the children. I do not fay, this is regular and certains but sometimes God deals thus: For this thing hath been so, and therefore it may be so again. We see it was done in the case of Ahab; he humbled himself, and went softly, and laid in sackcloth, and called for pardon, and God took from him a Judgement which was falling heavily upon him: but we all know his Repentance was imperfect and lame: The same evil fell upon his Sons; for so said God, I will bring the evil upon his house in his sons days. Leave no arrears for thy posterity to pay; but repent with an integral, a holy and excellent Repentance, that God being reconciled to thee throughly, for thy sake also he may bless thy seed after thee.

And after all this, add a continual, a fervent, a hearty, a never-cealing Prayer for thy children, ever remembring, when they beg a blefling, that God hath put much of their fortune into your hands; and a transient formal [God blefs thee] will not out-weigh the load of a great vice, and the Curfe that featters from thee by virtual contact, and by the chanels of relation, if thou beest a vicious person: Nothing can issue from thy fountain but bitter waters. And, as it were a great impudence for a condemned Traytor to beg of his injured Prince a province for his son for his sake: so it is an ineffective blessing we give our Children, when we beg for them what we have no title to for our selves; nay, when we can convey to them nothing but a Curse. The prayer of a sinner, the unhallowed wish of a vicious parent, is but a poor donative to give to a child who suck d poison from his nurse, and derives cursing from his Parents. They are punished with a double torture in the shame and pain of the damned, who dying enemies to God have left an Inventory of sins and wrath to be divided amongst

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SERM. are such as live a blessed life, and pray holy prayers, and perform an inte-

V.

gral Repentance, and do separate from the sins of their Progenitors, and do illustrious actions, and begin the blessing of their Family upon a new stock. For as from the eyes of some persons there shoots forth an evil influence, and some have an evil eye, and are infectious, some look healthfully as a friendly planet, and innocent as slowers; and as some fancies convey private effects to confederate and allied bodies; and between the very vital spirits of Friends and Relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants; and a good man is a * friend to every good man: and (they say) that an Usurer knows a Usurer, and one rich man another, there being by the very manners of men contracted a similatude of nature, and a communication of effects: So in parents and their children there is so great a society of nature and of manners, of blessing and cursing, that an evil parent cannot perish in a single death; and holy parents never eat their meal of blessing alone, but they make

to generation. Amen.

Διαμένει εν π πετων φιλία, εως εν άγαθοί εστν. κ διάρτη μένειμον. Aristot.

Sermon V.

the room shine like the fire of a holy Sacrifice; and a Father's or a Mother's piety makes all the house festival and full of joy from generation

THE

INVALIDITY of a late or DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

Jeremy 13. 16.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, (or, lest while ye look for light) he shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.



OD is the eternal fountain of Honour and the spring of Glory; in him it dwells essentially, from him it derives originally; and when an action is glorious, or a man is honourable, it is because the action is pleasing to God, in the relation of obedience or imitation, and because the man is honoured by God, and by God's Vicegerent:

and therefore God cannot be dishonoured, because all Honour comes from himself; he cannot but be gloristed, because to be himself is to be infinitely glorious. And yet he is pleased to say, that our sins dishonour him, and our obedience does gloriste him. But as the Sun, the great Eye of the world, prying into the recesses of Rocks and the hollowness of Valleys, receives species or visible forms from these objects,

objects, but he beholds them only by that light which proceeds from himself: So does God, who is the light of that Eye; he receives reflexes SER M. and returns from us, and these he calls glorifications of himself, but they are such which are made so by his own gratious acceptation. For God cannot be glorified by any thing but by himself, and by his own instruments, which he makes as mirrours to reflect his own excellency; that by feeing the glory of fuch emanations, he may rejoyce in his own works, because they are images of his infinity. Thus when he made the beauteous frame of Heaven and earth, he rejoyced in it, and glorified himself; because it was the glass in which he beheld his Wisdom and almighty Power. And when God destroyed the old World, in that also he glorified himself; for in those waters he saw the image of his Justice, they were the looking-glass for that Attribute; and God is said to laugh at and rejoice in the destruction of a sinner, because he is pleased with the Occonomy of his own Laws, and the excellent proportions he hath made of his Judgments consequent to our fins. But above all, God rejoyced in his Holy Son; for he was the image of the Divinity, the charader and express image of his person; in him he beheld his own Essence, his Wisdom, his Power, his Justice, and his person; and he was that excellent instrument designed from eternal ages to represent, as in a dou-ble mirrour, not only the glories of God to himself, but also to all the world; and he glorified God by the instrument of Obedience, in which God beheld his own Dominion and the Sanctity of his Laws clearly represented; and he saw his Justice glorisied, when it was fully satisfied, by the Passion of his Son: and so he hath transmitted to us a great manner of the Divine glorification, being become to us the Author and the Example of giving glory to God after the manner of men, that is by well-doing and patient suffering, by obeying his laws and submitting to his power, by imitating his holiness and confessing his goodness, by remaining innocent or becoming penitent; for this also is called in the Text Giving glery to the Lord our God.

For he that hath dishonoured God by sins, that is, hath denied by a moral instrument of duty and subordination to confess the glories of his power, and the goodness of his Laws, and hath dishonoured and despised his Mercy, which God intended as an instrument of our piety, hath no better way to glorifie God, than by returning to his duty, to advance the honour of the Divine Attributes, in which he is pleased to communicate himself, and to have entercourse with man. He that repents, confesses his own errour, and the righteousness of God's Laws, and by judging himself confesses that he deserves punishment; and therefore that God is righteous if he punishes him: and, by returning, confesses God to be the fountain of felicity, and the foundation of true, folid, and permanent joyes, faying in the sence and passion of the Disciples, Whither shall we go ? for thou hast the words of eternal life: and, by humbling himself, exalts God, by making the proportions of distance, more immense and vast. And as Repentance does contain in it all the parts of holy life which can be performed by a returning finner, (all the acts and habits of Vertue being but parts, or instances, or effects of Repentance:) so all the actions of a holy life do constitute the mass and body of all those instruments whereby God is pleased to glorifie himself. *For if God is glorified in the Sun and Moon, in the rare fabrick of the Hony combs, in the discipline of Bees, in the œconomy of Pilmires, in the little houses of Birds, in the curiofity of an Eye, God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of himself

SERM. V. from those pretty mirrours, which, like a crevice in a wall, through a narrow perspective transmit the species of a vast excellency: much rather shall God be pleased to behold himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emissions of our will and understanding; these being rational and apt instruments to express him, far better than the natural, as being nearer communications of himself.

But I shall no longer discourse of the Philosophy of this expression: Certain it is, that in the style of Scripture, Repentance is the great glorification of God; and the Prophet, by calling the people to give God glory, calls upon them to repent, and so expresses both the duty and the event of its the event being [Glory to God on bigh peace on earth, and good will towards men by the fole inftrument of Repentance. And this was it which Joshuah faid to Achan, [Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Ifrael, and make confession unto him:] that one act of Repentance is one act of glorifying God. And this David acknowledged; Against thee only bave I sinned:ut tu justificeris, that thou mightest be justified, or cleared:] that is, that God may have the honour of being righteous, and we the shame of receding from so excellent a perfection; or, as S. Paul quotes and explicates the place, Let God be true, and every man a liarges it is written. That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. But to clear the sence of this expression of the Prophet, observe the words of S. Johns And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, who hath power over those plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

So that having strength and reason from these so many authorities, I may be free to read the words of my Text thus, [Repent of all your sins, before God cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains.] And then we have here the Duty of Repentance, and the time of its performance: It must be unidered diverges, a seasonable and timely Repentance, a Repentance which must begin before our darkness begin, a Repentance in the day time; ut dum dies est operemini, that ye may work while it is to day: lest, if we stumble upon the dark mountains, that is, fall into the ruines of old age, which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way to be a craggy mountain, or if we stumble and fall into our last fickness; instead of health God send us to our grave, and instead of light and salvation, which we then considently look for, he make our state to be outer darkness, that is, misery irremediable, misery eternal.

This exhortation of the Prophet was always full of caution and prudence, but now it is highly necessary; fince men who are so clamorously called to Repentance that they cannot avoid the necessity of it, yet, that they may reconcile an evil life with the hopes of Heaven, have crowded, this duty into so little room, that it is almost strangled and extinct; and they have lopped off so many members, that they have reduced the whole body of it to the dimensions of a little finger, sacrificing their childhood to vanity, their youth to lust and to intemperance, their manhood to ambition and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires and unholy actions; and yet still farther, giving their old age to covetousness and oppression, to the world and the Devil: and after all this, What remains for God and for Religion? Oh, for that they will do well enough; upon their death-bed they will think a few godly thoughts, they will fend for a Priest to minister comfort to them, they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy Sacrament, and leave their goods behind them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some Dole and iffues of the Alms-basket to the poor; and if after all this they die quietly, and like a lamb, and be canoniz'd by a brib'd flatterer

Johna 7.19.

Pfal.51.4.

Rom.3.4.

Rev. 16.0.

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in a funeral Sermon, they make no doubt but they are children of the Kingdom, and perceive not their folly till without hope of remedy they SER M. roar in their expectations of a certain, but a horrid, eternity of pains. *Certainly nothing hath made more ample harvests for the Devil, than the deferring of Repentance upon vain confidences, and lessening it in the extension of parts as well as intension of degrees, while we imagine that a few tears and scatterings of devotion are enough to expiate the baseness of a fifty or threescore years impiety. This I shall endeavour to cure, by shewing what it is to repent, and that Repentance implies in it the duty of a life, or of many and great, of long and lasting parts of it 3 and then by direct arguments, shewing that Repentance put off to our Death-bed is invalid and ineffectual, fick, languid and impotent, like

our dying bodies and disabled faculties. 1. First, therefore, Repentance implies a deep forrow, as the beginning and introduction of this duty; not a superficial sigh or tear, not a calling our selves sinners and miserable persons; this is far from that godby forrow that worketh repentance: and yet I wish there were none in the world, or none amongst us, who cannot remember that ever they have done this little towards the abolition of their multitudes of sins: but yet if it were not a hearty, pungent forrow, a forrow that shall break the heart in pieces, a forrow that shall so irreconcile us to sin, as to make us rather chuse to die than to sin, it is not so much as the beginning of Repentance. But in Holy Scripture, when the people are called to Repentance, and Sorrow (which is ever the prologue to it) marches fadly, and first opens the scene, it is ever expressed to be great, clamorous, and sad: it is called a weeping forely in the next verse after my Text; a weeping with the bitterness of heart; a turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and Joel 2. 13. mourning; a weeping day and night; the sorrow of heart; the breaking of the spirit; the mourning like a dove, and chattering like a swallow. And if we observe the threnes and sad accents of the Prophet Jeremy, when he wept for the fins of his Nation; the heart-breakings of David, when he mourned for his Adultery and Murther ; and the bitter tears of S. Peter, when he washed off the guilt and baseness of his Fall, and the denying his Master; we shall be sufficiently instructed in this presuding or introduction to Repentance; and that it is not every breath of a figh or moisture of a tender eye, not every crying [Lord, have mercy upon me,] that is such a Sorrow as begins our restitution to the state of grace and Divine fayour: but fuch a Sorrow that really condemns our felves, and by an active, effectual fentence declares us worthy of stripes and death, of forrow and eternal pains, and willingly endures the first, to prevent the second; and weeps, and mourns, and fasts, to obtain of God but to admit us to a possibility of restitution. And although all Sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and senfitive trouble, which differs according to the temper of the body, cufrom, the fex, and accidental tenderness; yet it is not a Godly Sorrow see Rule of unless it really produce these effects: that is, 1. That it makes us really H. Living D. to hate, and 2. actually to decline sin; and 3. produce in us a fear of God's ance.p. 335. anger, a sense of the guilt of his displeasure; and 4. then such consequent trouble as can confift with such apprehension of the Divine pleasure: which if it express not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin; in confessing the goodness and justice of God threatning or punishing us; in patiently bearing the rod of God; in confession of our sins; in accusation of our selves; in perpe-

SERM.

2 Cor. 7:10.

in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution: it must be a sorrow of the Reasonable faculty, the greatest in its kind; and if it be less in kind, or not productive of these effects, it

is not a Godly Sorrow, nor the exordium of Repentance.

But I desire that it be observed that Sorrow for fins is not Repentance; not that duty which gives glory to God, so as to obtain of him that he will glorifie us. Repentance is a great Volume of duty; and Godly Sorrow is but the Frontispiece or Title-page; it is the harbinger or first introduction to it : Or, if you will consider it in the words of Saint Paul, [Godly forrow worketh Repentance :] Sorrow is the Parent, and Repentance is the product. And therefore it is a high piece of ignorance to suppose, that a crying out and roaring for our sins upon our Death-bed can reconcile us to God: our crying to God must be so early and so lasting, as to be able to teem and produce such a daughter, which must live long, and grow from an Embryo to an infant, from infancy to childhood, from thence to the fulness of the stature of Christ; and then it is a holy and a happy Sorrow. But if it be a Sorrow only of a Death-bed, it is a fruitless shower, or like the rain of sodom, not the beginning of Repentance, but the kindling of a flame, the commencement of an eternal Sorrow. For Ahab had a great forrow, but it wrought nothing upon his spirit; it did not reconcile his affections to his duty, and his duty to God. Judas had so great a forrow for betraying the innocent bloud of his Lord, that it was intolerable to his spirit, and he burst in the middle. And if mere Sorrow be Repentance, then Hell is full of Penitents; for [there is weeping,

and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for evermore.

Let us therefore beg of God (as Caleb's Daughter did of her Father,) Dedisti mihi terram aridam, da etiam & irriguam, Thou hast given me a dry land, give me also a land of waters, a dwelling place in tears, rivers of tears: Ut, quoniam non sumus digni oculos orando ad calum levare, at simus digni oculos plorando cacare, as Saint Austine's expression is ; That because we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to Heaven in prayer, yet we may be worthy to weep our eyes blind for sin. The meaning is, That we beg Sorrow of God, such a Sorrow as may be sufficient to quench the flames of Lust, and surmount the hills of our Pride, and may extinguish our thirst of Covetousness; that is, a Sorrow that shall be an effective principle of arming all our faculties against sin, and heartily setting upon the work of grace, and the perfevering labours of a holy life. * I shall only add one word to this: That our forrow for Sin is not to be estimated by our tears and our sensible expressions, but by our active hatred and dereliction of fin; and is many times unperceived in outward demonstration. It is reported of the Mother of Peter Lombard, Gratian, and Comestor, that she having had three sons begotten in unhallowed embraces, upon her Death-bed did omit the recitation of those crimes to her Confessor; adding this for Apology, that her three sons proved persons so eminent in the Church, that their excellency was abundant recompence for her demerit; and therefore she could not grieve, because God had glorified himself so much by three instruments so excellent; and that although her sin had abounded, yet God's grace did superabound. Her Confesior replied, At dole saltem, quod dolere non possis, Grieve that thou canst not grieve. And fo must we always fear that our trouble for sin is not great enough, that our forrow is too remis, that our affections are indifferent: but we can only be fure that our forrow is a godly forrow, when it worketh Repentance; that is, when it makes us hate and leave all our fin, and take up the cross of patience or penance; that is, confess our sin, accuse our

felves, condemn the action by hearty fentence: and then, if it hath no other emanation but Fasting and Prayer for its pardon, and hearty indu-SER M.

stry towards its abolition, our forrow is not reproveable.

2. For Sorrow alone will not do it; there must follow a total dereliction of our fin: and this is the first part of Repentance. Concerning which I consider, that it is a sad mistake among many that do some things towards Repentance, that they miltake the first addresses and instruments of this part of Repentance for the whole duty it self. Confession of sins is in order to the dereliction of them : but then Confession must not be like the unlading of a Ship to take in new stowage; or the vomits of intemperance, which ease the stomach that they may continue the merry meeting. But such a Confession is too frequent, in which men either comply with custom, or seek to ease a present load or gripe of Conscience, or are willing to dress up their Souls against a Festival, or hope for pardon upon so easie terms: these are but retirings back to leap the farther into mischief; or but approaches to God with the lips. No Confession can be of any wise, but as it is an instrument of shame to the perfon, of humiliation to the man, and dereliction of the sin; and receives its recompence but as it adds to these purposes: all other, is like the bleating of the calves and the lowing of the oxen, which saul referved after the spoil of Agag; they proclaim the sin, but do nothing towards its cure; they serve God's end to make us justly to be condemned out of our own mouths, but nothing at all towards our absolution. * Nay, if we proceed farther to the greatest expressions of humiliation, (parts of which, I reckon Falting, Praying for pardon, judging and condemning of our selves by instances of a present indignation against a crime;) yet unless this proceed so far as to a total deletion of the sin, to the extirpation of every vicious habit, God is not glorified by our Repentance, nor we se-cured in our eternal interest. Our sin must be brought to judgement, and like Antinous in Homer, laid in the midst as the facrifice and the cause of all the mischief.

'AM' ס עובע אולים אפודמו פני מנדופה ביוע מיחמידמי.

This is the murtherer, this is the Achan, this is he that troubles Israel: let the sin be confessed and carried with the pomps and solemnities of sorrow to its funeral, and so let the murtherer be slain. But if after all the forms of Confession and Sorrow, Fasting and Humiliation, and pretence of doing the will of God, we spare Agag and the fattest of the cattel, our delicious sins, and still leave an unlawful King, and a Tyrant-sin to reign in our mortal bodies, we may pretend what we will towards Repentance, but we are no better penitents than Abab; no nearer to the obtaining of our hopes than Esau was to his birthright, for whose Repentance there was no place lest, though be sought it carefully with tears.

3. Well, let us suppose our Penitent advanced thus far, as that he decrees against all sin, and in his hearty purposes resolves to decline it, as in a severe sentence he hath condemned it as his betrayer and his murtherer; yet we must be curious (for now only the Repentance properly begins) that it be not only like the springings of the thorny or the high way ground, soon up and soon down: For some men, when a sadness or an unhandsome accident surprizes them, then they resolve against their sin, but, like the Goats in Aristotle, they give their milk no longer than they are stung; as soon as the thorns are removed, these men return to their sirst hardness, and resolve then to act their first temptation. Others there are who never resolve against a sin, but either when they have no

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temptation to it, or when their appetites are newly fatisfied with it; like SER M. those who immediately after a full dinner resolve to fast at supper, and they keep it till their appetite returns, and then their resolution unties like the cords of vanity, or the gossamere against the violence of the Northern wind. Thus a Lustful person fills all the capacity of his Lust; and when he is wearied, and the fin goes off with unquietness and regret, and the appetite falls down like a horseleech, when it is ready to burst with putrefaction and an unwholesome plethory, then he resolves to be a good man, and could almost vow to be a Hermit; and hates his Lust, as Amnon hated his Sifter Thamar, just when he had newly acted his unworthy Rape: but the next spring-tide that comes, every wave of the temptation makes an inrode upon the resolution, and gets ground, and prevails against it, more than his resolution prevailed against his sin. How many drunken persons, how many Swearers resolve daily and hourly against their sin, and yet act them not once the less for all their infinite heap of shamefully retreiting purposes? * That resolution that begins upon just grounds of Sorrow and severe judgement, upon sear and love, that is made in the midst of a temptation, that is inquisitive into all the means and instruments of the cure, that prays perpetually against a fin, that watches continually against a surprize, and never finks into it by deliberation, that fights earnestly, and carries on the war prudently, and prevails by a never-ceasing diligence against the temptation; that only is a pious and well-begun Repentance. They that have their fits of a Quartan, well and ill for ever, and think themselves in perfect health when the Ague is retired, till its period returns, are dangerously mista-Those intervals of imperfect and fallacious resolution are nothing but states of death: and if a man should depart this world in one of those godly fits (as he thinks them,) he is no nearer to obtain his bleffed hope, than a man in the Stone-collick is to health when his pain is eafed for the present, his disease still remaining, and threatning an unwelcome return. That resolution only is the beginning of a holy Repentance which goes forth into act, and whose acts enlarge into habits, and whose habits are productive of the fruits of a holy life.

From hence we are to take our estimate, whence our resolutions of Piety must commence. He that resolves not to live well till the time comes that he must die, is ridiculous in his great design, as he is impertinent in his intermedial purposes, and vain in his hope. Can a dying man to any real effect resolve to be chaste? (for vertue must be an act of election, and chastity is the contesting against a proud and an imperious Lust, active flesh, and infinuating temptation.) And what doth he resolve against, who can no more be tempted to the fin of Unchastity than he can return back again to his youth and vigour? And it is confiderable, that fince all the purposes of a holy life which a dying man can make, cannot be reduced to act; by what law, or reason, or covenant, or revelation are we taught to diffingush the resolution of a dying man from the purpoles of a living and vigorous person? Suppose a man in his youth and health, moved by consideration of the irregularity and deformity of sin, the danger of its productions, the wrath and displeasure of Almighty God, should resolve to leave the puddles of impurity, and walk in the paths of righteousness; can this resolution alone put him into the state of Grace? Is he admitted to pardon and the favour of God, before he hath in some measure performed actually what he so reasonably hath refolved; By no means. For Resolution and purpose is in its own nature and constitution an imperfect act, and therefore can signific nothing

without its performance and confummation. It is as a faculty is to the act, as Spring is to the Harvest, as Seed-time is to the Autumn, as Eggs SER M. are to Birds, or as a Relative to its Correspondent; nothing without it. And can it be imagined that a Resolution in our health and life shall be ineffectual without performance? and shall a Resolution, barely such, do any good upon our Death-bed? Can such purposes prevail against a long impiety rather than against a young and a newly begun state of fin? Will God at an easier rate pardon the sins of fifty or fixty years, than the fins of our youth only, or the iniquity of five years, or ten? If a holy life be not necessary to be liv'd, why shall it be necessary to resolve to live it? But if a holy life be necessary, then it cannot be sufficient merely to refolve it, unless this resolution go forth in an actual and real service. Vain therefore is the hope of those persons who either go on in their sins, be-fore their last sickness, never thinking to return into the ways of God from whence they have wandred all their life, never renewing their resolutions and vows of holy living; or if they have, yet their purpoles are for ever blasted with the next violent temptation. More prudent was the prayer of David, Ob spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen.] And something like it, was the saying of the Emperor Charles the fifth, Inter vita negotia & mortis diem oportet fpatium intercedere. When ever our holy purposes are renewed, unless God gives us time to act them, to mortifie and subdue our Lusts, to conquer and subdue the whole kingdom of sin, to rise from our grave, and be clothed with nerves and flesh and a new skin, to overcome our deadly sicknesses, and by little and little to return to health and strength; unless we have grace and time to do all this, our fins will lie down with us in our graves.
*For when a man hath contracted a long habit of fin, and it hath been growing upon him ten or twenty, forty or fifty years, whose acts he hath daily or hourly repeated, and they are grown to a fecond nature to him, and have so prevailed upon the ruines of his spirit, that the man is taken captive of the Devil at his will, he is fast bound, as a slave tugging at the Oar, that he is grown in love with his fetters, and longs to be doing the work of fin; is it likely that after all this progress and growth in fin, (in the ways of which he runs fast without any impediment) is it (I say)likely, that a few days or weeks of fickness can recover him? [the special hindrances of that state I shall afterwards consider.] But, can a man be supposed so prompt to piety and holy living, a man (I mean) that hath lived wickedly a long time together, can he be of so ready and active a vertue upon the sudden, as to recover in a month or a week what he hath been undoing in 20 or 30 years? Is it so easie to build, that a weak and infirm person, bound hand and foot, shall be able to build more in three days than was a building above forty years? Christ did it in a figurative sence; but in this, it is not in the power of any man so suddenly to be recovered from folong a fickness. Necessary therefore it is that all these instruments of our Conversion, [Confession of sins, praying for their pardon, and resolution to lead a new life,] should begin [before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains;] lest we leave the work only resolved upon to be begun, which it is necessary we should in many degrees finish, if ever we mean to escape the eternal darkness. "For that we should actually abolish "the whole body of sin and death, that we should crucifie the old man with " his lufts, that we should lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so cusi-" ly befet us, that we should caft away the works of darkness, that we should cc awake from sleep, and arise from death, that we should redeem the time, "that we should cleanse our hands and purific our hearts, that we should

Gal.5.24.

Gal.6.15. Gal:5.6. 1 Cor. 7. 19.

"have escaped the corruption (all the corruption) that is in the whole world " through lust, that nothing of the old leaven should remain in us, but that " we be wholly a new lump, throughly transformed and changed in the image " of our mind; these are the perpetual precepts of the Spirit, and the certain duty of man: and that, to have all these in purpose only, is merely to no purpose, without the actual eradication of every vicious habit; and the certain abolition of every criminal adherence, is clearly and dogmatically decreed every where in the Scripture. For (they are the words of S. Paul) they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts: the work is actually done, and fin is dead, or wounded mortally, before they can in any sense belong to Christ, to be a portion of his inheritance . And , He that is in Christ is a new Creature. For in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature; nothing but a Keeping the Commandments of God. Not all our tears, though we should weep like David and his men at Ziklag, till they could weep no more, or the women of Ramah, or like the weeping in the valley of Hinnom, could suffice, if we retain the affection to any one fin, or have any unrepented of, or unmortified. It is true, that a contrite and a broken heart God will not despise. No, he will not. For if it be a hearty and permanent Sorrow, it is an excellent beginning of Repentance; and God will to a timely Sorrow give the grace of Repentance: He will not give pardon to Sorrow alone; but that which ought to be the proper effect of Sorrow, that God shall give. He shall then open the gates of mercy, and admit you to a possibility of restitution; so that you may be within the covenant of Repentance, which if you actually perform, you may expect God's promise. And in this sence Confession will obtain our pardon, and Humiliation will be accepted, and our holy purpoles and pious resolutions shall be accounted for; that is, these being the first steps and addresses to that part of Repentance which consists in the abolition of lins, shall be accepted so far as to procure so much of the pardon, to do so much of the work of restitution, that God will admit the returning man to a further degree of emendation, to a nearer possibility of working out his Salvation. But then, if this Sorrow and Confession and these strong purposes begin then when our life is declined towards the West, and is now ready to set in darkness and a dismal night; because of themselves they could but procure an admission to Repentance, not at all to pardon and plenary absolution, by shewing that on our Death-bed these are too late and ineffectual, they call upon us to begin betimes, when these imperfect acts may be consummate and perfect, in the actual performing those parts of holy life to which they were ordained in the nature of the thing, and the purposes of God.

4. Lastly, suppose all this be done, and that by a long course of strictness and severity, mortification and circumspection, we have overcome all our vicious and baser habits contracted and grown upon us like the ulcers and evils of a long furfeit, and that we are clean and swept; suppose that he hath wept and fasted, prayed and vowed to excellent purposes : yet all this is but the one half of Repentance: (so infinitely mistaken is the world, to think any thing to be enough to make up Repentance.) But to renew us, and restore us to the favour of God, there is required far more than what hath been yet accounted for. See it in the 2d. of S. Peter, I Chap. 4,5. vers. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith vertue, to vertue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, and so on, to godliness, to brotherly kindness, and to charity: These things must be in you and

abound. This is the sum total of Repentance: we must not only have overcome fin, but we must after great diligence have acquired the habits SER M. of all those Christian graces which are necessary in the transaction of our affairs, in all relations to God and our neighbour, and our own persons. It is not enough to fay, Lord, I thank thee, I am no extortioner, no adulterer, not as this Publican; all the reward of such a penitent is, that when he hath escaped the corruption of the world, he hath also escaped those heavie judgments which threatned his ruine.

Nec furtum feci, nec fugi, si mihi dicat Servus: Habes pretium; loris non ureris, aio, Non hominem occidi: Non pasces in cruce corvos.

If a servant have not robb'd his Master, nor offered to fly from his bon-dage, he shall escape the Furca, his flesh shall not be exposed to birds or fishes; but this is but the reward of innocent slaves. It may be, we have escaped the rod of the exterminating Angel, when our sins are crucified; but we shall never enter into the joy of the Lord, unless after we have put off the old man with his affectious and lusts, we also put on the new man in righteousness and holiness of life. And this we are taught in most plain doctrine by S. Paul, [Let us lay aside the weight that doth so easily beset us;] Heb. 12.13 that is the one half: and then it follows, [Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. These are the fruits meet for Repentance, spoken of by S. John Baptist; that is, when we renew our first undertaking in Baptism, and return to our courses of innocence.

Parcus Deorum cultor & infrequens, Insanientis dum sapientiæ Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum Vela dare, atque iterare cursus Cogor relictos-

The sence of which words is well given us by S. John; Remember whence Revel. 2. thou art fallen, repent, and do thy first works. For all our hopes of Heaven tely upon that Covenant which God made with us in Baptism; which is, That being redeemed from our vain conversation, we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all our days. Now when any of us hath prevaricated our part of the Covenant, we must return to that state, and redeem the intermedial time spent in sin by our doubled industry in the ways of grace: we must be reduced to our first estate, and make some proportionable returns of duty, for our sad omissions, and great violations of our Baptismal Vow. For God having made no Covenant with us but that which is configned in Baptism; in the same proportion in which we retain or return to that, in the same we are to expect the pardon of our fins, and all the other promises Evangelical; but no otherwise: unless we can shew a new Gospel, or be baptized again by God's appointment. He therefore that by a long habit, by a state and continued course of sin, hath gone so far from his Baptismal purity, as that he hath nothing of the Christian left upon him but his name; that man hath much to do to make his garments clean, to purifie his Soul, to take off all the stains of sin, that his spirit may be presented pure to the eyes of God, who beholds no impurity. It is not an easie thing to cure a long contracted habit of fin. Let any intemperate person but try in his own instance of Drunkenness; or the Swearer in the sweetning his unwholsome language: But then so to command his tongue that he never swear, but that his speech be prudent, pious, and apt to edifie the hearer, or in

SERM. VI.

some sence to glorifie God; or to become temperate, to have got a habit of Sobriety, or Chastity, or Humility, is the work of a life. And if we do but consider that he that lives well from his younger years, or takes up at the end of his youthful heats, and enters into the courses of a sober life early, diligently and vigoroufly, shall find himself after the studies and labours of 20 or 30 years Piety but a very imperfect person, many degrees of Pride left unrooted up, many inrodes of Intemperance or beginnings of Excess, much Indevotion and backwardness in Religion, many Temptations to contest against, and some infirmities which he shall never say he hath master'd; we shall find the work of a Holy life is not to be deferred till our days are almost done, till our strengths are decayed, our spirits are weak, and our Lusts strong, our habits confirmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent: For what is very hard to be done, and is always done imperfectly, when there is length of time, and a less work to do, and more abilities to do it withal; when the time is short, and almost expired, and the work made difficult and vast, and the strengths weaker, and the faculties are disabled, will seem little less than absolutely impossible. *I shall end this general consideration with the question of the Apostle, If the righteous scarcely be saved, (if it be so difficult to overcome our sins, and obtain vertuous habits; difficult (I say) to a righteous, a sober and well-living person) where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? what shall become of him who, by his evil life, hath not only removed himself from the affections, but even from the possibilities of Vertue? He that bath lived in sin, will die in forrow.

SERMON VI.

PART II.

What Parts and Ingredients of Repentance are affigned, when it is described in holy Scripture: Secondly, by shewing the Necessities, the absolute necessities of a Holy life, and what it means in Scripture to [live bolily:] Thirdly, by considering what directions or intimations we have concerning the last Time of beginning to repent; and what is the longest period that any man may venture with safety. And in the prosecution of these particulars, we shall remove the Objections, those aprons of sig-leaves which menuse for their shelter to palliate their sin, and to hide themselves from that from which no rocks or mountains shall protect them, though they fall upon them; that is, the wrath of God.

First, That Repentance is not only an abolition and extinction of the Body of sin, a bringing it to the Altar, and slaying it before God and all the people; but that we must also xevor needs and rich presents, the oblation of Good works and Holy habits with the facrifice, I have already proved: But now if we will see Repentance in its stature and integrity of constitution described, we shall find it to be the one half of all that which God requires of Christians. Faith and

Repentance

Repentance are the whole duty of a Christian. Faith is a sacrifice of the Understanding to God; Repentance facrifices the whole Will: That gives SERM. the knowing; this gives up all the desiring faculties: That makes us Disciples; this makes us servants of the Holy Jesus. Nothing else was preached by the Apostles, nothing was enjoyned as the duty of man, nothing else did build up the body of Christian Religion. So that, as Faith contains all that Knowledg which is necessary to Salvation: fo Repentance comprehends in it all the whole practice and working duty of a returning Christian. And this was the sum total of all that S. Paul preached to the Gentiles, when, in his farewel-Sermon to the Bishops and Priests of Ephesus, he professed that he kept back nothing that was profitable to them; and yet it was all nothing but this, [Repentance towards God, and Acts 20.21. faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.] So that whosever believes in Jesus Christ, and repents towards God, must make his accounts according to this frandard, that is, to believe all that Christ taught him, and to do all that Christ commanded. And this is remarked in S. Paul's * Catechism, where he *Heb. 6.1. gives a more particular Catalogue of Fundamentals: he reckons nothing but Sacraments, and Faith; of which he enumerates two principal articles, [Resurrection of the dead, and eternal Judgment.] Whatsoever is practical, all the whole duty of man, the practice of all obedience is called [Repentance from dead works:] which, if we observe the singularity of the phrase, does not mean [Sorrow,] for forrow from dead works is not sence; but it must mean mutationem status, a Conversion from dead works, which (as in all motions) supposes two terms; from dead works to living works; from the death of sin, to the life of righteousness.

I will add but two places more, out of each Testament one; in which I suppose you may see every lineament of this great duty described, that you may no longer miltake a Grashopper for an Eagle; Sorrow and holy purposes, for the entire duty of Repentance. In the 18. of Ezek. 21. you shall find it thus described: ["But if the wicked will turn from all his sins "that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is law-"full and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.] Or, as it is more fully described in Ezek. 33.14. ["When I say unto the wicked, Thoushalt." Surely die: If he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; If " the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he bath robbed, walk in the " statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not "die.]Here only is the condition of pardon; to leave all your fins, to keep all God's statutes, to walk in them, to abide, to proceed, and make progress in them; and this, without the interruption by a deadly fin, [without committing iniquity]to make restitution of all the wrongs he hath done, all the unjust money he hath taken, all the oppressions he hath committed, all that must be satisfied for, and repayed according to our ability: we mult make fatisfaction for all injury to our neighbour's fame, all wrongs done to his Soul; he must be restored to that condition of good things thou didlt in any sence remove him from: When this is done according to thy utmost power, then thou hast repented truly, then thou hast a title to the promise; thou shalt surely live thou shalt not die for thy old sins thou hast formerly committed. * Only be pleased to observe this one thing; that this place of Ezekiel is it which is so often miltaken for that common saying At what time soever a sinner repents him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord.] For although at what time soever a sinner does repent, (as Repentance is now explained) God will forgive him, and that Repentance as it is now stated cannot be done [at what time soever] not upon a man's

Death-

Death-bed; yet there are no fuch words in the whole Bible, nor any near-SERM. er to the sence of them, than the words I have now read to you out of the Prophet Ezekiel. Let that therefore no more deceive you, or be made a colour to countenance a persevering sinner, or a Death-bed Penitent.

Neither is the duty of Repentance to be bought at an easier rate in the New Testament. You may see it described in the 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11. Godly forrow worketh Repentance. Well; but what is that Repentance which is fo wrought? This it is: Behold this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of your selves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge. These are the fruits of that Sorrow that is effectual; these are the parts of Repentance : clearing our selves of all that is past, and great carefulness for the future; anger at our selves for our old sins, and fear lest we commit the like again; vehement desires of pleasing God, and zeal of holy actions, and a revenge upon our selves for our fins, called by 1 Cor. 11.31. Saint Paul, in another place, a judging our selves, lest we be judged of the Lord. And in pursuance of this truth, the Primitive Church did not admit a finning person to the publick Communions with the faithful, till besides their Sorrow they had spent some years in an apatoegyla, in doing good works, and holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination which led them into those sins whereof they were now admitted to repent. And therefore we find that they stood in the station of Penitents seven years, thirteen years, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God, and his Holy Church.

-Scelerum si bene pænitet, Eradenda Cupidinis Pravi sunt elementa; & tenera nimis Mentes asperioribus Formande studiis--Hor. l. 3. od. 24.

Hierocles. ે તું ઘરીને જગાવ તેહીંમ કોરા અજના વાર્લ તેક જો કોરા જાયા તેક જો તે તે જો See Life of H. Jesus, part 2. Disc. of Repentance.

Repentance is the institution of a philosophical and severe life, and utter extirpation of all unreasonableness and impiety, and an address to, and a final passing through all the parts of holy living.

Now consider whether this be imaginable or possible to be done upon our Death-bed, when a man is frighted into an involuntary, a sudden, and unchosen piety. 'O μετανοῶν & φόω το εἰανδίων τον τὰ καλά πεμξον αἰενονται, saith Hierocles. He that never repents till a violent fear be upon him, till he apprehend himself to be in the jaws of death, ready to give up his unready and unprepared accounts, till he fees the Judge fitting in all the addresses of dreadfulness and Majesty, just now (as he believes) ready to pronounce that fearful and intolerable Sentence of [Go je cursed into everlasting fire; this man does nothing for the love of God, nothing for the love of Vertue: It is just as a condemned man repents that he was a Traitor; but repented not till he was arrested, and sure to die. Such a Repentance as this may still consist with as great an affection to fin as ever he had; and it is no thanks to him, if, when the knife is at his throat, then he gives good words and flatters. But suppose this man in his health and the midst of all his Lust, it is evident that there are some circumstances of action in which the man would have refused to commit his most pleasing sin. Would not the son of Tarquin have refused to ravish Lucrece, if Junius Brutus had been by him? Would the impurest perfon in the world act his Lust in the market-place? or drink off an intemperate goblet, if a dagger were placed at his throat? In these circumstan-

ces their fear would make them declare against the present acting their impurities. But does this cure the intemperance of their affections? SERM. Let the impure person retire to his closet, and Junius Brutus be ingaged in a far distant war, and the dagger be taken from the Drunkard's throat, and the fear of shame, or death, or judgment be taken from them all; and they shall no more resist their temptation, than they could before remove their fear : and you may as well judge the other persons holy, and haters of their fin, as the man upon his Death-bed to be penitent; and rather they than he, by how much this mans fear, the fear of Death, and of the infinite pains of Hell, the fear of a provoked God, and an angry eternal Judge, are far greater than the apprehensions of a publick shame, or an abused husband, or the poniard of an angry person. * These men then fin not, because they dare not; they are frighted from the act, but not from the affection, which is not to be cured but by discourse, and reasonable acts, and humane considerations; of which that man is not naturally capable who is possessed with the greatest fear, the fear of death and damnation. If there had been time to cure his fin, and to live the life of grace, I deny not but God might have begun his Conversion with so great a fear, that he should never have wiped off its impression: * but if sure animum the man dies then, dies when he only declaims against, and curses his sin, superior rebut; as being the author of his present fear and apprehended calamity; it is rebut; alique at vivery far from reconciling him to God or hopes of pardon, because it proor vertue, but of sorrow, a deserved sorrow, and a miserable, unchosen, * Not al ren
unavoidable fear;

-moriensque recepit Quas nollet victurus aquas-

He curses sin upon his Death-bed, and makes a Panegyrick of Vertue, which in his life-time he accounted folly, and trouble, and needless vexation.

Que mens est hodie, cur cadem non puero fuit ? Hor. 1. 4. Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt gene? od. 10.

I shall end this first Consideration with a plain exhortation; That since Repentance is a duty of so great and giant-like bulk, let no man croud it up into so narrow room, as that it be strangled in its birth for want of time and air to breathe in: Let it not be put off to that time when a man hath scarce time enough to reckon all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. Will any man hunt the wild Boar in his Garden, or bait a Bull in his Closet? will a woman wrap her child in her Handkerchief, or a Father fend his fon to school when he is 50 years old? These are undecencies of providence, and the instrument contradicts the end: and this is our case. There is no room for the Repentance, no time to act all its effential parts: and a Child, who hath a great way to go before he be wife, may defer his studies, and hope to become learned in his old age, and upon his death-bed; as well as a vicious person may think to recover from all his ignorances and prejudicate opinions, from all his false principles and evil customs, from his wicked inclinations and ungodly habits, from his fondnesses of Vice and detestations of Vertue, from his promptness to sin and unwillingness to grace, from his spiritual deadness and strong sensuality, upon his Death-bed (I fay) when he hath no natural strength and as little spiritual, when he is criminal and impotent, hardned in his vice and soft in his fears, full of pallion E 3

passion and empty of wildom, when he is fick and amazed, and timorous SERM. and confounded, and impatient, and extremely miserable.

And now when any of you is tempted to commit a fin, remember that fin will ruine you, unless you repent of it. *But this (you say) is no news, and so far from affrighting you from sin, that (God knows) it makes men fin the rather. For therefore they venture to act the present temptation, because they know, if they repent, God will forgive them; and therefore

they resolve upon both, to sin now, and repent hereafter.

Against this folly I shall not oppose the consideration of their danger, and that they neither know how long they shall live, nor whether they shall die or no in this very act of fin; though this consideration is very material, and if they should die in it, or before it is washed off, they perish: But I consider these things. 1. That he that resolves to sin upon a resolution to repent, by every act of sin makes himself more uncapable of repenting, by growing more in love with fin, by remembring its pleasures, by ferving, it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of our spirit. And if you resolve to sin now, because it is pleasant, how do ye know that your appetite will alter? will it not appear pleasant to you next week, and the next week after that, and so for ever? And still you fin, and still you will repent; that is, you will repent when the fin can please you no longer: For so long as it can please you, so long you are tempted not to repent, as well as now to act the fin : and the longer you lie in it, the more you will love it. So that it is in effect to fay, I love my fin now, but I will hereafter hate it; only I will act it a while longer, and grow more in love with it, and then I will repent; that is, then I will be fure to hate it when I shall most love it. 2. To repent fignifies to be forrowful, to be ashamed, and to wish it had never bin done. And then see the folly of this temptation: I would not fin, but that I hope to repent of it; that is, I would not do this thing, but that I hope to be forrowful for doing it, and I hope to come to shame for it, heartily to be ashamed of my doings, and I hope to be in that condition, that I would give all the world I had never done it; that is, I hope to feel and apprehend an evil infinitely greater than the pleafures of my fin. And are these arguments fit to move a man to fin? What can affright a man from it, if these invite him to it? It is as if a man should invite one to be a partner of his Treason by telling him, If you will joyn with me you shall have all these effects by it; You shall be hang'd, drawn and quarter'd, and your bloud shall be corrupted, and your estate forfeited, and you shall have many other reasons to wish you had never done it. He that should use this Rhetorick in earnest might well be accounted a mad man; this is to scare a man, not to allure him: and so is the other when we understand it truly. 3. For I consider, He that repents, wishes he had never done that fin. Now I ask, does he with so upon reason, or without reason? Surely, if he may, when he hath fatisfied his Luft; ask God pardon, & be admitted upon as easie terms for the time to come as if he had not done the fin, he hath no reason to be sorrowful, or wish he had not done it. For though he hath done it, and pleased himself by injoying the pleasure of sin for that season, yet all is well again; and let him only be careful now, and there is no hurt done, his pardon is certain. How can any man that understands the reason of his actions and passions with that he had never done that sin in which then he had pleasure, and now he feels no worse inconvenience. But he that truly repents wishes, and would give all the world, he had never done it: Surely then his present condition in respect of his past sin hath some very great evil in it, why elfe should he be fo much troubled? True, and this it is. He that hath committed fine after Baptism is fallen out

of the favour of God, is tied to hard duty for the time to come, to cry vehemently unto God, to call night and day for pardon, to be in great SER Mi fear and tremblings of heart, lest God should never forgive him, lest God will never take off his Sentence of eternal pains; and in this fear and in some degrees of it he will remain all the daies of his life; and if he hopes to be quit of that, yet he knows not how many degrees of God's anger still hang over his head; how many sad miseries shall afflict, and burn, and purifie him in this world with a sharpness so poinant as to divide the marrow from the bones; and for these reasons, as a considering man that knows what it is to repent, wishes with his foul he had never sinned, and therefore grieves in proportion to his former crimes, and present mifery, and future danger.

And now suppose that you can repent when you will, that is that you can grieve when you will, (though no man can do it, no man can grieve when he pleafe; though he could shed tears when he list, he cannot grieve without a real or apprehended infelicity; but, suppose it) and that he can fear when he please, and that he can love when he please, or what he please; that is, suppose a man be able to say to his palate, Though I love sweet-meats, yet to morrow will I hate and loath them, and believe them bitter and distasteful things; suppose (I say) all these impossibilities: yet fince Repentance does suppose a man to be, in a state of such real milery, that he hath reason to curse the day in which he sinned, is this a fit argument to invite a man that is in his wits to fin? to fin in hope of repentance? as if danger of falling into Hell, and fear of the Divine anger, and many degrees of the Divine Judgements, and a lasting forrow, and a perpetual labour, and a never-cealing trembling, and a troubled Conscience, and a sorrowful spirit, were fit things to be desired or hoped for.

The fum is this: He that commits fins shall perish eternally, if he never does repent. And if he does repent, and yet untimely, he is not the better; and if he does not repent with an entire, a perfect and compleat repentance, he is not the better. But if he does, yet Repentance is a duty full of fears, and forrow, and labour 5 a vexation to the spirit; an afflictive, penal, or punitive duty; a duty which suffers for sin, and labours for grace, which abides and fuffers little Images of Hell in the way to Heaven: and though it be the only way to Felicity, yet it is befet with thorns and daggers of fufferance, and with rocks and mountains of duty. Let no man therefore dare to fin upon the hopes of Repentance; for he is a fool and a hypocrite, that now chules and approves what he knows hereafter he must condemn.

2. The Second general confideration is, The Necessity, the absolute necessity of Holy living. God hath made a Covenant with us, that we must give up our selves, bodies and souls, not a dying, but a living and Rom. 12.1/ healthful facrifice. He hath forgiven all our old fins, and we have bargained to quit them, from the time that we first come to Christ, and give our names to him, and to keep all his Commandments. We have taken the Sacramental Oath, like that of the old Raman Militia, πειθαριήσειν, εξ ποιήσειν το προσαποιλιών ύπο των αρχώντων εξ δύναμιν, τος must believe, and obey, and do all that is commanded us, and keep our station, and fight against the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, not to throw away our military girdle; and we are to do what is bidden us, or to die for it, even all that is bidden us, according to our power. For, pretend not that God's Commandments are impossible. It is dishonourable to think God enjoyns us to do more than he enables us to do; and it is a

II.

contradiction to fay we cannot do all that we can; and [through chrift SER M. that strengthens me I can do all things, faith S. Paul. However we can do to the utmost of our strength, and beyond that we cannot take thought; Impossibilities enter not into deliberation; but according to our abilities and natural powers affifted by God's grace, so God hath covenanted with us to live a holy life. [For in Christ Jesus nothing availeth but a New creature, nothing but Faith working by Charity, nothing but keeping the Commandments of God: They are all the words of S. Paul before quoted; to which he adds, And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy.] This is the Covenant, [they are the Ifrael of God] upon those peace and mercy shall abide. If they become a New creature, wholly transformed in the Image of their mind; if they have Faith, and this Faith be an operative working Faith, a Faith that produces a holy life, a Faith that works by Charityzif they keep the commandments of Godzthen they are within the Covenant of Mercy, but not else: for in Christ Jesus nothing else availeth. *To the same purpose are those words, Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.]
Peace with all men implies both Justice and Charity, without which it is impossible to preserve Peace : Holiness implies all our duty towards God, universal diligence: and this must be followed, that is, pursued with diligence, in a lasting course of life and exercise: and without this we shall never see the face of God. I need urge no more authorities to this purpole; these two are as certain and convincing as two thousand: And fince thus much is actually required, and is the condition of the Covenant; it is certain that Sorrow for not having done what is commanded to be done, and a purpose to do what is necessary to be actually performed, will not acquit us before the righteous judgment of God. *[For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live godly, justly, and soberly in this prefent world.] For upon these terms alone we must [look for the bleffed hope, the gloriom appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.] * I shall no longer insist upon this particular, but only propound it to your consideration. To what purpose are all those Commandments in Scripture, of every page almost in it, [of living bolily, and according to the Commandments of God, of adorning the Gospel of God, of walking as in the day, of walking in light, of pure and undefiled Religion, of being holy as God is holy, of being humble and meek, as Christ is humble, of putting on the Lord Jesus, of living a spiritual life,] but that it is the purpose of God, and the intention and design of Christ dying for us, and the Covenant made with man that we should expect Heaven upon no other terms in the world, but of a holy life, in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus?

Now if a vicious person, when he comes to the latter end of his daies, one that hath lived a wicked, ungodly life, can for any thing he can do upon his Death-bed be said to live a holy life; then his hopes are not desperate: but he that hopes upon this only, for which God hath made him no promise, I must say of him as Galen said of Consumptive persons, y when that (son, town unally unally exem, The more they hope, the morfe they are: and the relying upon such hopes is an approach to the grave, and a

fad Eternity.

Peleos & Priami transit, vel Nestoris atas, Et fuerat serum jam tibi desinere. Eja age, rumpe moras ; quò te spettabimus usque ? Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil. Mart.l. 2.ep. 64.

Tit.2.11,12.

And

And now it will be a vain question to ask, Whether or no God cannot it fave a dying man that repents after a vicious life. For it is true, God SER M can doit if he please, and he can raise children to Abraham out of the stones, and he can make ten thousand worlds, if he sees good, and he can do what he lift, and he can fave an ill-living man though he never repent at all, fo much as upon his Death-bed: All this he can do. But God's power. is no ingredient into this question: we are never the better that God can do it, unless he also will; and whether he will or no, we are to learn from himself, and what he hath declared to be his will in Holy Scripture. Nay since God hath said, that without actual Holiness no man shall see God, God by his own will hath restrained his power; and though absolutely he can do all things, yet he cannot do against his own word.
*And indeed the rewards of Heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's burthen is so light, his yoke is so easie, that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the Eternal Son of God his lifebloud to obtain Heaven for us upon that condition: and who then shall die again for us, to get Heaven for us upon easier conditions? What would you do, if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all thy lifetime with bread and water? were not Heaven a great bargain even after all this? And when God requires nothing of us but to live foberly, justly, and godly, (which very things of themselves to men are a very great felicity, and necessary to his present well-being) shall we think this to be a load, and an unsufferable burthen? and that Heaven is so little a purchase at that price, that God in mere justice will take a Death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty? Strange it should be so : but stranger, that any man should rely upon such a vanity, when from God's Word he hath nothing to warrant such a considence. But these men do like the Tyrant Dionysus, who stole from Apollo his golden Cloak, and gave him a Cloak of Arcadian home-spun, saying that this was lighter in Summer, and warmer in Winter. These men sacrilegiously rob God of the service of all their golden days, and serve him in their hoary head, in their furrs and grave-cloaths, and pretend that this late service is more agreeable to the Divine Mercy on one fide, and humane infirmity on the other, and so dispute themselves into an irrecoverable condition; having no other ground to rely upon a Death-bed or late-begun Repentance, but because they resolve to enjoy the pleasures of sin; and for Heaven, they will put that to the venture of anafter-game. These men sow in the flesh and would reap in the spirit; live to the Devil, and die to God: and therefore it is but just in God that their hopes should be desperate, and their craft be folly, and their condition be the unexpected, unfeared inheritance of an eternal

3. Lastly, our last enquiry is into the Time, the last or latest time of III. beginning our Repentance. Must a man repent a year, or two, or seven years, or ten, or twenty before his death? or what is the last period after which all Repentance will be untimely and ineffectual? To this captious question I have many things to oppose. 1, We have entered into Covenant with God, to serve him from the day of our Bap-tism to the day of our death. He hath [from this out to us, That he ink. 1.73,74. * would grant unto us, that we being delivered from fear of our enemies, smight ferve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.] Now although God will not. δ ουθεσκίνης ε κοινής οιθε-

Heb. 12.1. Verf. 3.

velas Bandav Save Sau, forget our infirmities, but pass by the weaknesses of an SERM. honest, a watchful and industrious person; yet the Covenant he makes with us is from the day of our first voluntary profession to our grave; and according as we by fins retire from our first undertaking, so our condition is insecure: there is no other Covenant made with us, no new beginnings of another period; but if we be returned, and fin be cancelled, and grace be actually obtained, then we are in the first condition of pardon: but because it is uncertain when a man can have master'd his vices, and obtain'd the graces, therefore no man can tell any set time when he must begin. 2. Scripture describing the duty of Repenting sinners, names no other time but [to day] To day if ye will hear his voice, har-dennot your hearts. 3. The duty of a Christian is described in Scripture to be such as requires length of time, and a continued industry. [Let us run with patience the race that is set before us :] and [Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds.] So great a preparation is not for the agony and contention of an hour, or a day, or a week, but for the whole life of a Christian, or for great parts of its abode. 4. There is a certain period and time fet for our Repentance, and beyond that all our industry is ineffectual. There is a day of visitation, our own day; and there is a day of visitation that is God's day. This appeared in the case of Jerusalem; [O Jerusa-lem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the time of thy visitation, at least in this thy day.] Well they neglected it; and then there was a time of God's visitation, which was his day, called in Scripture [the day of the Lord;] and because they had neglected their own day, they fell into inevitable ruine: No repentance could have prevented their final ruine. And this which was true in a Nation, is also clearly affirmed true in the case of single persons. [Look diligently lest any fail of the grace of God, Lest there be an person among you as Esau, who sold his birth-right, And afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for his Repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.] Esau had time enough to repent his bargain as long as he lived; he wept forely for his folly, and carefulness fat heavie upon his Soul; and yet he was not heard, nor his Repentance accepted ; for the time was palt. And [take heed]

Heb.12.15.

groom came before they had finished their journey, and they were shut out from the communion of the Bridegroom's joys. Therefore concerning the Time of beginning to repent no man is certain but he that hath done his work. Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nist qui se ad eam din composuerat, said Seneca. He only dies chearfully who stood waiting for death in a ready dress of a long preceding preparation.

faith the Apostle, lest it come to pass to any of you to be in the same case. Now if ever there be a time in which Repentance is too late, it must be the time of our Death-bed, and the last time of our life. And after a man is fallen into the displeasure of Almighty God, the longer he lies in his fin without Repentance and emendation, the greater is his danger, and the more of his allowed time is spent; and no man can antecedently, or before-hand, be fure that the time of his Repentance is not past; and those who neglect the call of God; and refuse to hear him call in the day of grace, God will laugh at them when their calamity comes: they shall call, and the Lord shall not hear them. * And this was the case of the five foolish Virgins when the arrest of Death surprized them: They discovered their want of oyl, they were troubled at it; they begg'd oyl, they were refused; they did something towards the procuring of the oyl of Grace, (for they went out to buy oyl:) and after all this stir the Bride-

Epift. 30.

preparation. He that repents to day, repents, late enough that he did not begin yesterday: but he that puts it off till to morrow isvain and miserable. SERM.

hodie jam, Posthume, vivere serum est: Martial. 1.5.ep.59. Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri.

Well; But what will you have a man do that hath lived wickedly, and is now cast upon his Death-bed? shall this man despair, and neglect all the actions of Piety, and the instruments of Restitution in his sickness? No, God forbid. Let him do what he can then; it is certain it will be little enough: for all those short gleams of Piety and slashes of lightning will help towards alleviating some degrees of misery; and if the man recover, they are good beginnings of a renewed Piety; and Abab's tears and humiliation, though it went no farther, had a proportion of a reward, though nothing to the portions of Eternity. So that he that fays, it is every day necessary to repent, cannot be supposed to discourage the Piety of any day: a Death-bed Piety, when things are come to that sad condition, may have many good purposes: therefore even then neglect nothing that can be done. Well; But shall such persons despair of Salvation? to them I shall only return this: That they are to consider the conditions which on one fide God requires of us; and, on the other fide, whether they have done accordingly. Let them confider upon what terms God hath promised Salvation, and whether they have made themselves capable by performing their part of the Obligation. If they have not, I must tell them, that not to hope where God hath made no promise, is not the sin of Despair, but the misers of Despair. A man hath no ground to hope that ever he shall be made an Angel, and yet that not hoping is not to be called Despair: and no man can hope for Heaven without repentance; and for such a man to despair, is not the sin, but the misery. If such persons have a promise of Heaven, let them shew it, and hope it, and enjoy it: if they have no promife, they must thank themselves, for bringing themselves into a condition without the Covenant, without a promise, hopeless and miserable,

But will not trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ save such a man? For that, we must be tried by the Word of God, in which there is no Contract at all made with a dying person that lived in name a Christian, in practice a Heathen; and we shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our Bleffed Saviour, if we think them to be an Umbrella to shelter our impious and ungodly living. But that no fuch person may after a wicked life repose himself on his Death-bed upon Christ's Merits, observe but these two places of Scripture. [Our Saviour Jesus Christ, Titus 2. 14. who gave himself for us] what to do? that we might live as we list, and hope to be saved by his merits? no, but [that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

These things speak and exhort,] Saith S. Paul. But more plainly yet in S. Peter, [Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree,] to what end? Pet. 2.24. [that we being dead unto fin, should live unto righteousness.] Since therefore our living a holy life is the end of Christ's dying that sad and holy death for us, he that trusts on it to evil purposes, and to excuse his vicious life, does (as much as in him lies) make void the very purpose and design of Christ's Passion, and dishonours the blood of the everlasting Covenant; which Covenant was confirmed by the Blood of Christ: but as it see, Life of brought peace from God, so it requires a holy life from us.

But why may not we be faved as well as the Thief upon the Cros? Even part. 2.

Jejus, Difc. of

because

SERM. VI. because our case is nothing alike. When Christ dies once more for us. we may look for such another instance; not till then. But this Thiefdid but then come to Christ, he knew him not before; and his case was, as if a Turk or Heathen should be converted to Christianity, and be baptized, and enter newly into the Covenant upon his Death-bed: Then God pardons all his fins. And so God does to Christians when they are baptized or first give up their names to Christ by a voluntary Confirmation of their Baptismal Vow: but when they have once entred into the Covenant, they must perform what they promise, and to what they are obliged. The Thief had made no Contract with God in Jesus Christ, and therefore failed of none; only the defailances of the state of ignorance Christ paid for at the Thief's admission: But we that have made a Covenant with God in Baptism, and failed of it all our days, and then return at night when we cannot work, have nothing to plead for our selves, because we have made all that to be useless to us, which God with so much mercy and miraculous wisdom gave us to secure our interest and hopes of

And therefore let no Christian man, who hath covenanted with God to give him the service of his life, think that God will be answered with the sighs and prayers of a dying man: for all that great obligation which lies upon us cannot be transacted in an instant, when we have loaded our Souls with sin, and made them empty of vertue; we cannot so soon grow up to a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Εθείν των μεγάλων ἄφνω γίνεται. You cannot have an apple or a cherry, but you must stay its proper periods, and let it blossom and knot, and grow and ripen, [and in due time we shall reap, if we faint not] (saith the Apostle:) Far much less may we expect that the fruits of Repentance and the issues and degrees of Holiness shall be gathered in a few days or hours. γνώμης δι ἀνθεωων καςπὸν Θέλλος κινόσωσου. Υου must not expect such fruits in a little time, nor with little labour.

Suffer not therefore your selves to be deceived by false principles and vain considences: for no man can in a moment root out the long-contracted habits of Vice, nor upon his Death-bed make use of all that variety of preventing, accompanying, and persevering Grace, which God gave to man in mercy, because man would need it all, because without it he could not be saved; nor upon his Death-bed can he exercise the duty of Mortiscation, nor cure his Drunkenness then, nor his Lust, by any act of Christian discipline, nor run with patience, nor resist unto blood, nor endure with long sufferance; but he can pray, and groan, and call to God, and resolve to live well when he is dying. But this is but just as the Nobles of Xerxes, when in a storm they were to lighten the ship to preserve their King's life, they did neconviolae, continued and account, they did their obeisance, and leaped into the sea: so (Ifear) do these men, pray, and mourn, and worship, and so leap overboard into an Ocean of eternal and intolerable calamity. From which God deliver us, and all faithful people.

Hunc volo landari qui sine morte potest. Mart. ep. l. 1.

Vivere quod propero pauper, nec inutilis annis, Da veniam; properat vivere nemo satis.

Differat hoc, patrios optat qui vincere census,
Atriáque immodicis arotat imaginibus.

Mart. l. 2. ep. 90.

Arrian. Epi-Ret.l. 1.c. 15.

Sermon

IIV. nomrecules without there wags

r Councils, hear with their care

SERM. VII.

THE

DECEITFULNESS of the HEART.

Jeremy 17.9.

The Heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

there is no other difference but this, that some are crafty enough to deceive, others soolish enough to be cozened and abused: And yet the scales also turn, for they that are the most crafty to cozen others are the veriest Fools, and most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his Money, and lose their own Innocency; they disturb his Rest, and vex their own Conscience; they throw him into Prison, and themselves into Hell; they make Poverty to be their brother's portion, and Damnation to be their own. Man entred into the world first alone; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him: The Serpent, and Eve, and himselfall joyned; first to make him a sool and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable. But he first cozened himself, giving up himself to believe a lie; and being desirous to listen to the whilpers of a tempting spirit, he sinned before he fell; that is, he had within him a false Understanding, and a depraved Will: and these were the Parents of his Disobedience, and this was the parent of his Inselicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entred for himself and his posterity into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easie, wilful, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so, that if no body else will abuse him, he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and Sensuality doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of Man in the rudenesses and first lines of its visage seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed.

For a man is helples and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a Raisin is able to kill him; any Trooper out of the Egyptian Army, a Flie can do it, when it goes on God's errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every suture contingency, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is incompased with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable: what shall this poor helples thing do? Trust in God? him he hath offended, and he fears him as an enemy; and God knows, if we look only on our selves, and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he relie upon Princes? God help poor Kings; they relie upon their Subjects, they sight with their swords, levie forces

with their money, consult with their Councils, hear with their ears, and SEIR M. are strong only in their union, and many times they use all these things against them: but, however, they can do nothing without them while they live, and yet if ever they can die they are not to be trusted to. Now Kings and Princes die so sadly and motoriously, that it was used for a Proverb in Holy Scripture, Te shall die like men, and fall like one of the Who then shall-we trust in? In our Friend? Poor, man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself: he gives thee counsel to chuse a Wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to chuse his Religion: he counsels thee to abstain from a Duel, and yet slays his own Soul with Drinking: like a person void of all understanding, he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very careless of his own; for he does highly despise to berray or be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is falle to God; and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune, but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we rely upon our Patron, like the Roman Clients, who waited hourly upon their persons, and daily upon their baskers, and mightly upon their lusts, and married their friendships, and contracted also their harred and quarrels? This is a confidence will deceive us. For they may lay us by, justly or unjustly; they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change; or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burthenfom in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer than their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance; and indeed generally it is so, in all the instances of men. We have a friend that is wise; but I need not his counsel but his meat: or my patron is bountiful in his Largesses; but I am troubled with a sad spirit; and money and presents do me no more ease than persumes do to a broken arm. We seek life of a Phylician that dies, and go to him for health who cannot cure his own breath or Gowt; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, imparient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandring and wild, without counsel, and without remedy. At last, after the infatuating and deceiving all our considences without, we have nothing lest us but to return home, and dwell within our felves: for we have a fufficient stock of Self-love, that we may be confident of our own affections, we may trust our selves furely; for what we want in skill we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances: and no man understands my own case so well as I do my self, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for my self; for I am most concern d not to a-buse my self; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may belt relie upon my felf. Alas! and God help us! we shall find it to be no such matter: For we neither love our selves well, nor understand our own case; we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most falle, persidious creatures to our selves in the whole world: even the Heart of a man, a mans own Heart is deceifful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? And who can chuse but know it?

And there is no greater argument of the Deceitfulness of our Hearts than this, that no man can know it all; it colens us in the very number of its cosenage. But yet we can reduce it all to two heads. We say concerning a falle man, Trust him not, for he will deceive you; and we fay concerning a weak and broken staff, Lean not upon it, for that

will also deceive you. The man deceives because he is false, and the staff because it is weak; and the Heart because it is both. So that it is deceit- SERM. ful above all things; that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things, but in other things where it can, it is false and desperately wicked. The first fort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the second is its iniquity;

and that is the worse calamity of the two

1. The Heart is deceitful in its Strength; and when we have the growth of a Man, we have the weaknesses of a child : nay more yet, and it is a fad confideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new Converts, which are like to the great emissions of Lightning, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoak, from smoak to embers, and from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the phantastick images of death. And the Primitive Church were zealous in their Religion up to the degree of Cherubins, and would run as greedily to the sword of the Hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a Christian spirit, even to the receiving of the Holy Sacrament. A man would think it reasonable that the first infancy of Christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remiss, gentle, and unactive; and that according as the object or evidence of Faith grew, which in every Age hath a great degree of argument superadded to its confirmation, so should the Habit also and the Grace, the longer it lasts, and the more objections it runs through, it still should shew a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of Providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of Miracles, still the Christian should grow more certain in his Faith, more refreshed in his Hope, and warm in his Charity; the very nature of these Graces increasing and swelling upon the very nourishment of experience, and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the Altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But indeed it is because we put on strange fire, and put out the fire upon our hearths by letting in a glaring Sun-beam, the fire of Lust, or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fires of God, and suppress the sweet cloud of incense. The Heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of it felf, it cannot command its own attentions to a Prayer of ten lines long, but before its end it shall wander after some thing that is to no purpose: and no wonder then that it grows weary of a holy Religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual weakness and the falseness of our Hearts in the matters of Religion, than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their Prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity: and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no weariness of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a bleffing, and receiving it; nothing but doing our selves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest Person, and greatest King of the world: and that we should be unwilling to do this, so unable to continue in it, so backward to return to it, so without gust and relish in the doing it, can have no visible reason in the nature of the thing, but something within us, a strange lickness in the Heart, a spiritual nauseating or loathing of Manna, some-

VII.

thing that hath no name; but we are fure it comes from a weak, a faint: SERM. and false heart.

VII.

And this weak heart is strong in Passions, violent in Desires, unresistable in its Appetites, impatient in its Lust, furious in Anger: here are strengths enough, one should think. But so have I seen a man in a Fever fick and distempered, unable to walk, less able to speak sence, or to do an act of counsel, and yet when his Fever had boil'd up to a Delirium, he was strong enough to beat his Nurse-keeper and his Doctor too, and to refift the loving violence of all his friends, who would fain bind him down to reason and his bed : and yet we still say, he is weak and sick to death. Θέλω γο είναι τόνες εν σω μαπ, αλλ' ως υγιαίνοιπ, ως αθλένπ. For these strengths of madness are not health, but furiousness and disease. έκ είσι τόνοι, αλλά άτονία έτερον τρόπον, It is weakness another way. And so are the Strengths of a mans Heart: they are fetters and manacles; strong, but they are the cordage of imprisonment; so strong, that the Heart is not able to stir. And yet it cannot but be a huge sadness, that the Heart shall pursue a temporal interest with wit and diligence, and an unwearied industry; and shall not have strength enough in a matter that concerns its eternal interest to answer one objection, to resist one assault, to defeat one art of the Devil; but shall certainly and infallibly fall, when ever it is

tempted to a pleasure.

This, if it be examined, will prove to be a Deceit indeed, a pretence, rather than true upon a just cause; that is, it is not a natural, but a moral and a vicious weakness: And we may try it in one or two familiar infrances. One of the great Strengths, shall I call it? or Weaknesses of the Heart, is, that it is strong, violent and passionate in its Lusts, and weak and deceitful to relift any. Tell the tempted person, that if he act his Lust he dishonours his body, makes himself a servant to folly, and one flesh with a harlot; he defiles the Temple of God, and him that defiles 2 Temple will God destroy: Tell him that the Angels, who love to be prefent in the nastiness and filth of Prisons, that they may comfort and affait chaste Souls and holy persons there abiding, yet they are impatient to behold or come near the filthiness of a Lustful person: Tell him that this fin is so ugly, that the Divels, who are Spirits, yet they delight to counterfeit the acting of this crime, and descend unto the daughters or sons of men, that they may rather lose their natures, than not to help to set a Lust forward: tell them these and ten thousand things more ; you move them no more, than if you should read one of Tullie's Orations to a Mule: for the truth is, they have no power to refift it, much less to master it ; their Heart fails them when they meet their Mistres; and they are driven like a Fool to the Stocks, or a Bull to the flaughter-house. And yet their Heart deceives them; not because it cannot resist the Temptation, but because it will not go about it : For it is certain, the Heart can, if it lift. For let a Boy enter into your Chamber of pleafure, and discover your folly, either your Lust disbands, or your shame hides it; you will not, you dare not do it before a stranger Boy: and yet that you dare do it before the eyes of the All-feeing God, is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence, and the fallness of your Heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsel as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of Temperance as impossible: Try this once substain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt him with twenty pound, and he shall fait from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholsome meat. And

if Chastity and Temperance be so easie, that a man may be brought to either of them with fo ready and easie instruments; let us not suffer our SERM. Heart to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences, and the strength of its defires: For we do more for a Boy than for God, and for twenty pound than Heaven it felf.

But thus it is in every thing elfe. Take an Heretick, a Rebel, a person that hath an ill Cause to manage; what he wants in the strength of his Reason, he shall make it up with diligence; and a person that hath Right on his side is cold, indiligent, lazie, and unactive trusting that the good-ness of his Cause will do it alone. But so Wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous in a bad matter, and others are remiss in a good; and the same person shall be very industrious always when he hath least rea-son so to be. That's the first particular, The Heart is deceitful in the managing of its natural strengths; it is Naturally and Physically strong; but

Morally weak and impotent.

2. The Heart of man is deceitful in making Judgement concerning its own Acts. It does not know when it is pleased or displeased, it is peevish and triffing, it would and it would not, and it is in many cases impossible to know whether a mans Heart desires such a thing or not. Saint Ambrose hath an odd faying, Facilius inveneris innocentem, quam qui penitentiam digne egerit; It is easier to find a man that lived innocently, than one that hath truly repented him, with a grief and care great according to the merit of his fins. Now suppose a man that hath spent his younger years in vanity and folly, and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober countels; this man will find his Heart so sale, so subtil and sugitive, so fecret and undiscernible, that it will be very hard to discern whether he repents or no. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore repents; Alas! he so hates it, that he dares not, if he be wife, tempt himself with an opportunity to act it : for in the midst of that which he calls hatred, he hath so much love left for it, that if the fin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kisses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why elfe should it be necessary for us to pray that we be not led into temptation, but because we hate the sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and yet follow it; we are angry at our selves, and yet cannot be without it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant? And when we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord upon our fins, yet we are kind-hearted, and spare the Agag, the reigning fin, the splendid temptation, we have some kindnesses left

These are but ill signs. How then shall I know by some infallible token that I am a true Penitent? What and if I weep for my fins? will you not then give me lieve to conclude my Heart right with God, and at enmity with fin? It may be fo. But there are some friends that weep at parting; and is not thy weeping a forrow of affection? It is a fad thing to part with our long companion. Or it may be thou weepelt, because thou wouldest have a sign to cozen thy self withal: for some men are more desirous to have a sign than the thing signified; they would do fomething to thew their Repentance, that themselves may beheve themselves to be Penstents, having no reason from within to believe fo. And I have seen some persons weep heartily for the loss of six-pence, or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident; and they that do so cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be when they weep, they are vexed for

SERM. VII.

the dirtying of their linnen, or some such trifle, for which the least passion is too big an expence. So that a man cannot tell his own Heart by his Tears, or the truth of his Repentance by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? Shall we suppose a man to pray against his? So did Saint Austin; when in his youth he was tempted to Lust and Uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly defired that God would not hear him : for here the Heart is cunning to deceive it self. For no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sence or degree listen to the Temptation: For to pray against a fin, is to have defires contrary to it, and that cannot confift with any love or any kindness to it. We pray against it, and yet do it; and then pray again, and do it again: and we defire it, and yet pray against the defires; and that's almost a contradiction. Now because no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or chuse against his own desires; it is plain that we cannot know whether we mean what we say when we pray against sin, but by the event: If we never act it, never entertain it, always resss it, ever fight against it, and finally do prevail; then at length we may judge our own Heart to have meant honeftly in that one particular.

Nay, our Heart is so deceitful in this matter of Repentance, that the Masters of Spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory Arts and Stratagems to secure the duty. And we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn; to be forrowful, because we are not forrowful. Now if we be forrowful in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? Is our Heart so secret to our selves? But if we be not forrowful in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it in the second period? For we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second, or reslexact of sorrow, as of the first and direct action. And therefore we may also as well be sorrowful the third time for want of the just measure or hearty meaning of the second sorrow, as be sorrowful the second time for want of true sorrow at the first; and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this Artisice, if we be not certain of our natural and hearty passion in our direct and first ap-

prehenfions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make no question of their Salvation, being confident only because they are confident; and they are so, because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extremely timorous and fearful. How many persons are there in the world that say they are sure of their Salvation, and yet they dare not die? And if any man pretends that he is now fure he shall be saved, and that he cannot fall away from Grace; there is no better way to confute him, than by advising him to send for the Surgeon, and bleed to death. For what should hinder him? not the sin; for it cannot take him from God's favour: not the change of his condition; for he fays he is fure to go to a bettter: Why does he not then fay, neuema, like the Roman Gallants when they decreed to die? The reafon is plainly this, They say they are confident, and yet are extremely timorous; they profess to believe that Doctrine, and yet dare not trust it; nay, they think they believe, but they do not: so false is a mans Heart, so deceived in its own Acts, so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The Heart is deceitful in its own Resolutions and Purposes: For many times men make their resolutions only in their Understanding, not in their Will; they resolve it sitting to be done, not decree that they

3.

will do it; and in stead of beginning to be reconciled to God by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far only SER M. as to be convinced, and apt to be condemned, by their own sentence.

But suppose our Resolutions advanced farther, and that our Will and

Choices also are determined; see how our Hearts deceive us.

t. We refolve against those sins that please us not, or where Temptation is not present, and think by an over-acted zeal against some fins to give an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be Drunk; the Company, or the Discourse, or the pleasure of madness, or an easie nature and a thirsty soul, something is amis, that cannot be helped: But they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or it may be they must satisfie a beastly Lust; but they will not be drunk for all the world; and hope by their Temperance to commute for their want of Chastity. But they attend not the Crast of their secret enemy, their Heart: for it is not love of the Vertue; if it were, they would love * Vertue in all its instances; for Chastity is as much a Vertue as Temperance, and God hates Lust as much as he hates Drunkenness. But this fin is against my Health, or it may be it is against my Lust; it ris, esfi amini makes me impotent, and yet impatient; full of delire, and empty of men porte Vin ftrength. Or else I do an act of Prayer, lest my Conscience become un- confession quiet, while it is not satisfied, or cozened with some intervals of Religion: "" 10 " I shall think my self a damned wretch if I do nothing for my Soul; but if off babin I do, I shall call the one sin that remains nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my Prayer is not my Religion, but my

Peace, and my Pretence, and my Fallacy.

2. We resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly. I will not be drunk in the streets; but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober: or if I be overtaken, it shall be in civil and gentile company. Or it may be not so much; I will leave my Intemperance and my Lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure; I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and by a siction of imagination will represent it present, and so be satisfied with a little effeminacy or phantastick pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you; as if any man can be faithful in much that is faithless in a little. He certainly is very much in love with fin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its Picture, and wears its Favour, and delights in the Fancie of it, even with the same desire as a most passionate Widow parts with her dearest Husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him: But certainly her staring all day upon his Picture, and weeping over his Robe, and wringing her hands over his Children, are no great figns that the hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with their

. We refolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it asside as long as the Temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world that against every Communion renew their vows of holy living? men that for twenty for thirty years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily act; and fure enough they did believe themselves. And yet if a man had daily promised us a courtesie, and failed us but ten times, when it was in his power to have done it, we should think we had reason never to beheve him more. And can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our Hearts, which they have fallified so many hundred times? We re-

folve against a Religious Time, because then it is the Custom of men, and

lins.

SERM. VII.

the Guise of the Religion:or we resolve when we are in a great danger; and then we promise any thing possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us; we only care to remove the present pressure, and when that is, over and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferencies: or else we cannot look a Temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. Epictetus tells us of a Gentleman returning from Banishment, who in his journey towards home called at his house, told a sad ftory of an imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent, he was resolved for the future to live Philosophically, and entertain no buliness, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the Court, not to falute Casar with ambitious attendencies, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly, when nature or necessity called him. It may be, this man believed himself, but Epidetus did not. And he had reason: For and with a kaiou es mivariotes, Letters from Cæsar met him at the doors, and invited him to Court; and he forgot all his promises, which were warm upon his lips; and grew pompous, secular and ambitious, and gave the Gods thanks for his preferment. Thus many men leave the world, when their fortune hath left them; and they are severe and Phi-losophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return: But let a prosperous Sun-shine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation; their own falle Heart is enough; they are like Ephraim in the day of

battel, starting aside like a broken bow.

The Heart is falle, deceiving and deceived, in its Intentions and Deligns. A man hears the Precepts of God injoyning us to give Alms of all we posses; he readily obeys with much chearfulness and alacritie, and his Charity, like a fair spreading tree, looks beauteously: But there is a canker at the heart; the man blows a Trumpes to call the poor together, and hones the Neighbouthood will take notice of his Bounty. Nay he and hopes the Neighbourhood will take notice of his Bounty. gives Alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes by some accident or other to be praised both for his Charity and Humility. And if by chance the fame of his Alms comes abroad, it is but his duty to let his light so shine before men, that God may be glorified, and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified. But then to distinguish the intention of our heart in this Instance, and to seek God's glory in a particular which will also conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence to flick to the Heart, no reflexion upon our felves, or no complacency and delight in popular noises, is the nicety of abstraction, and requires an Angel to do it. Some men are so kind-hearted, so true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans, and receive his last breath, and close his eyes. And if this be done with honest intention, it is well: but there are some that do so, and yet are Vultures and Harpyes; they watch for the Carcase, and prey upon a Legacy. A man with a true story may be malicious to his enemy, and by doing himself right may also do him wrong: And so false is the Heart of man, so clancular and contradictory are its Actions and Intentions, that some men pursue Vertue with great earnestness, and yet cannot with patience look upon it in another: It is Beauty in themselves and Deformity in the other. Is it not plain, that not the Vertue, but its Reputation is the thing that is pursued? And yet if you tell the man so, he thinks he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment, when from

fear of punishment we are brought to fear God ? And yet the difference must be distinguishable in new Converts and old Disciples; and our fear SERM. of punishment must so often change its circumstances, that it must be at last a fear to offend out of pure Love, and must have no formality left to distinguish it from Charity. It is easie to distinguish these things in Precepts, and to make the separation in the Schools; the Head can do it eafily, and the Tongue can do it : but when the Heart comes to separate Alms from Charity, God's glory from Humane praile, fear from fear, and Sincerity from Hypocrifie; it does so intricate the questions, and confound the ends, and blind and entangle circumstances, that a man hath reason to doubt that his very best Actions are fullied with some unhandsom excrescency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but always to be imperfect.

Here a man would think were enough to abate our confidence, and the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand upon his guard, and to keep a strict watch upon his own Heart, as upon his greatest enemy from without. Custodi, libera me de meipso, Dens; It was S. Angustine's Prayer, Lord, keep me, Lord, deliver me from my self. If God will keep a man that he be not Felo de fe, that he lay no violent hands upon himself, it is certain nothing else can do him mischief. on Zeus, on poieg, on Egwous, as Agamemnon said; Neither Jupiter, nor Destinies, nor the Furies, but it is a mans self that does him the mischief. The Devil can but tempt, and offer a dagger at the heart; unless our hands thrust it home, the Devil can do nothing, but what may turn to our advantage. And in this fence we are to understand the two seeming Contradictories in Scripture: Pray that you enter not into Temptation, said our Blessed Saviour; and, Count it all joy when you enter into divers Temptations, said one of Christ's Disciples. The case is case. When God suffers us to be tempted he means it but as a trial of our Faith, as the exercise of our Vertues, as the opportunitie of Reward; and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy; since the Trial of our Faith worketh Patience, and Patience Ex-perience, and Experience causeth Hope, and Hope maketh not ashamed: But yet for all this, Pray against Temptations: for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blind men do their clubs, neither distinguish perfon nor part; as foon they strike the face of their friends as the back of the enemy; our Hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the Lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty, and give advantages to the Devil. He that uses a temptation thus, hath reason to pray against it; and yet our Hearts do all this and a thousand times more; so that we may ingrave upon our Hearts the Epitaph which was digged into Thyeses grave-

Nolite, inquit, bospites adire ad me; illico ifthic, Ne contagio mea umbráve obsit : Tanta vis sceleris in corpore beret.

There is so much Falseness and iniquity in mans Heart, that it defiles all the members: it makes the Eyes lustful, and the Tongue slanderous; it fills the Head with mischief, and the Feet with blood, and the Hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternal misery. But this is but the beginning of those throes and damnable impieties which proceed out of the Heart of man, and defile the whole constitution. I have yet told but the Weakacties of the Heart & I shall the next time tell you the Iniquities,

those inherent Devils which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make SERM. it desperately wicked, that is wicked, beyond all expression.

VIII.

SERMON VIII.

PART II.

Ρχη φιλοσοφίας συναίο ποις το αυτέ α πνέας, κ, αδυναμίας περί τα άναικαία, It is the beginning of wisdom to know a mans own weaknesses, and failings in things of greatest necessity: And we have here so many objects to surnish out this knowledge, that we find it with the longest and latest before it be obtained. A man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is well stricken in death. A mans Heart at first being like a plain Table, unspotted indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it: As foon as ever we ripen toward the imperfect uses of our Reason, we write upon this Table such crooked characters, fuch imperfect configurations, so many fooleries, and stain it with so many blots and vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our hearts for a great while: And when Education and ripeness, Reason and Experience, Christian Philosophy and the Grace of God have made fair impressions, and written the Law in our hearts with the singer of God's Holy Spirit, we blot out this Hand-writing of God's Ordinances, or mingle it with false principles and interlinings of our own; we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God; either we make the Rule uneven, we bribe or abuse out Guide, that we may wander with an excuse; or if nothing else will do it, we turn head and profess to go against the Laws of God. Our Hearts are blind, or our Hearts are hardened; for these are two great arguments of the Wickedness of our Hearts; they do not see, or they will not see the ways of God; or if they do, they make use of their seeing that they may avoid them.

1. Our Hearts are Blind, wilfully blind. I need not instance in the Ignorance and involuntary nescience of men; though if we speak of the necessary parts of Religion, no man is ignorant of them without his own fault : fuch ignorance is always a direct fin, or the direct punishment of a fin, 3. a sin is either in its bosom, or in its retinue. But the Ignorance that I now intend is a voluntary, chosen, delightful Ignorance, taken in upon defign, even for no other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly. God hath opened all the windows of Heaven, and fent the Sun of Righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath discover'd the abysses of his own wisdom, made the Second person in the Trinity to be the Doctor and Preacher of his sentences and secrets, and the third person to be his Amanuensis or Scribe, and our Hearts to be the Book in which the Doctrine is written, and Miracles and Prophecies to be its arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it: and those Leaves contain within their folds all that excellent Morality which right Reason pickt up after the shipwrack of nature, and all those wise sayings which fingly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of Revelation. So that now the wildom of God hath made every mans heart to be the true Vetonica, in which he hath imprinted his own

lineaments to perfectly, that we may dress our felves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our Bleer Brother & this we may be pure SER M. as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wildow and holinels. This hath God done for us 3 and fee what we do for Him. We stand in our own light, and quench God's: we love darkness more than light, and entertain our felves accordingly. For how many of us are there that understand nothing of the ways of God; that know no thore of the Laws of Jesus Christ than is remaining upon them fince they leatned the childrens Catechilm? But amongst a thousand how many can explicare and unfold for his own practice the Ten Commandments, and how many forts of fins are there forbidden? which therefore pass into action, and never pass under the scrutimes of Repentance, because they know not that they are fine? Are there not very many who know not the particular duties of Meekness, and never consider concerning Long-Suffering? and if you talk to them of growth in Grace, or the spirit of obligation, of the melancholick lectures of the Cross, and imitation of and conformity to Christ's sufferings, or adherences to God, or rejoicing in him, or not quenching the spirit; you are too deep-learned for them. And yet thele are duties fet down plainly for our practice, necessary to be acted in order to our Salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fulness of the Spirit: in the mean time we understand not many parts of our duty. We enquire into something that may make us talk or be talked of, or that we may trouble a Church, or disturb the peace of minds: but in things that concern Holy living, and that wildom of God whereby we are wife unto Salvation, never was any age of Christendom more ignorant than we. For, if we did not wink hard, we must needs fee that obedience to Supreme Powers, Denying of our felves, Hamility, Peacefulnes, and Charity, are written in such Capital Text letters, that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the Heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the Understanding it were not to be imagined that any man thould bring the 13 Chapter to the Romans to prove the lawfulness of taking up Arms against our Rulers: but so we may abuse our selves at noon, and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there have been a fort of witty men that maintained that Snow was hot. I wonder not at the Probleme : but that a man should believe his Paradox, and should let Eternity go away with the fallacy, and rather lose Heaven than leave his foolish argument; is a fign that wilfulness and the deceiving Heart is the Sophither, and the great ingredient into our Deception.

But that I may be more particular; the Heart of man uses devices that

it may be ignorant.

1. We are imparient of honest and severe reproof; and order the circumstances of our persons and addresses, that we shall never come to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear his Curate tell him that he is covetous, or that he is Proud? Acyd, & Savils vegeos, It is Calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his head, and relates to his person: and yet if he speak only in general, every man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet if our Physician tell us, You look Well, Sir, but a Fever lucks in your spirits; Astroon, of providing the, Drink Julips, and abstain from fleshing man thinks it shame or calumny to be told so: But when we are told that our Liver is inflamed with Luft or Anger, that our Heart is vexed with Envie, that our Eyes rowl with wantonnels; and though we think all is well, yet we are lick, lick unto death, and near to a lad and fatal fentence;

fhall think that man that tells us so is impudent, or uncharitable; and yet SERM. he hath done him no more injury than a deformed man receives daily from his Looking-glass, which if he shall dash against the wall, because it shews him his face just as it is; his face is not so ugly as his manners. And yet our Heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains, that like the Elephant, it tramples in the pure streams, and first troubles them, then

stoops and drinks, when he can least see his huge deformity.

2. In order to this, we heap up Teachers of our own, and they guide us, not whither, but which way they please: for we are curious to go our own way, and careless of our Hospital or Inne at night. A fair way, and a merry company, and a pleasant easie guide will entice us into the enemies quarters; and fuch guides we cannot want : Improbitati occasio nunquam defuit; If we have a mind to be wicked, we shall want no prompters; and false Teachers, at first creeping in unawares, have now so filled the pavement of the Church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground but you tread upon a snake. Cicero l. 7. ad Atticum, undertakes to bar-gain with them that kept the Sibyls Books, that for a summ of money they should expound to him what he please; and to be sure, ut quidvis potius quam Regem proferrent, They shall declare against the Government of Kings, and say, that the Gods will endure any thing rather than Monarchy in their beloved Republick. And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews: The Prophets prophesie lies, and my people love to have it so: and what will the end of these things be? even the same that Cicero complain'd of, Ad opinionem Imperatorum fict as esse Religiones; Men shall have what Religion they please, and God shall be intitled to all the quarrels of Covetous and Ambitious persons; η πιοθίαν φιλοππίζειν, as Demosthenes wittily complained of the Oracle, An answer shall be drawn out of Scripture to countenance the design, and God made the Rebel against his own Ordinances. And then we are zealous for the Lord God of Hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our Hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall fet all the rest on working? The Heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of Reason, then remove the Land-mark, and dig down the causey-ways, and then either hire a blind guide, or make him so: and all these Arts to get Ignorance, that they may secure impiety. At first, man lost his Innocence only in hope to get a little Knowledge: and ever fince then, lest Knowledge should discover his errour, and make him return to Innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins, or discompose our secular designs. And as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise Religion, and sent his Spirit to give the gift of Faith to his Church, that upon the foundation of Faith he might build a holy life: now our Hearts love to retire into Blindness, and sneak under the covert of False principles, and run to a cheap Religion, and an unactive Discipline, and make a Faith of our own, that we may build upon it ease, and ambition, and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a mind to; scarce once in seven years denying a strong and an unruly appe-tite upon the interest of a just Conscience and holy Religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety, so certain arts and apt instruments for the Devil, that it does his work intirely, and produces an infallible

3. But the Heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of Ignorance; and that is, Incogitancy or Inconfiden ration. For there is wrought upon the spirits of many men great impres-

De Divinat.

fion by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by humane Laws, and the customes and severities of sober persons, and the sears of Religion, SERM. and the awfulness of a reverend man, and the several arguments and endearments of Vertue: and it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of Reason, and Religion, and Arguments, and Reverence, and Modesty, and Fear; but men are forced from their sin by the violence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman Gentleman kept off a whole band of fouldiers who were fent to murther him, and his eloquence was stronger than their anger and design: but suddenly a rude Trooper rushed upon him, who neither had nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat whose musick had charmed all his fellows in peace and gentleness. So do we. The Grace of God is Armour and defence enough against the most violent incursion of the spirits and the works of darkness; but then we must hear its excellent charms, and confider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the Heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to Uncleanness, or to an act of Oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me, that the pleasure of the sin is transient and vain, unsatisfying and empty; that I shall die, and then I shall wish too late that I had never done it. It tells me that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me. It represents to me all the joys of Heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a fad Eternity; and, if I will stay and hear them, ten thousand excellent things befides, fit to be twifted about my understanding for ever. But here the Heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but by a meer wildness of purpose and rudeness of resolution ventures super totam materiam, at all, and does the thing, not because it thinks it fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or no; it is enough that it pleases a pleasant appetite. And if such Incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men, (first by resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit, then by quenching Him,) we shall find the consequents to be, first an Indifferency, then a Dulness, then a Lethargy, then a direct Hating the ways of God; and it commonly ends in a wretehlesness of spirit to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall pass hence not like the shadow, but like the dog, that departeth without sense, or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment in the considerations of Eternity: and tis but just, when we will not hear our King speak and plead, not to save himself, but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency, and Salvation, to prevent our ruine, and our intolerable calamity. Certainly, we are much in love with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back, and stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

Nay farther yet, we suffer the Arguments of Religion to have so little impression upon our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of Childhood, or the Problems of uncertain Philosophy. A man talks of Religion but as of a Dream, and from thence he awakens into the Businesses of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect action and full resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them: But when he falls afleep again, or is taken from the Scene of his own employment and choice, then he dreams again, and Religion makes such Impressions as is the conversation of a Dreamer, and he acts accordingly. Theorritus tells of a Fisherman that dreamed he had taken s σα'εμικον ίχθυν, κλλά xelow, a Fish of Gold, upon which being over-joyed, he made a vow that

he would never fill more: but when he waked, he foon declared his vow SERM. to be mull, because he found his golden Fish was escaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purpofes of Religion: Sometimes in a good mood we feem to fee Heaven opened, and all the streets of the Heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low affections of the world, and the impure adherencies of fin : but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the inclinations and habitual desires of our false Hearts. those other defires and fine considerations disband, and the Resolutions taken in that pious fit melt into Indifferency and cold Customes. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who having used to put his trust in Dreams, one night dreamed that all Dreams were vain: For he confidered, If so, then This was vain, and then Dreams might be true for all this: but if they might be true, then this Dream might be so upon equal reason: and then Dreams were vain, because This Dream, which told him fo, was true; and fo round again. In the fame circle runs the Heart of man : All his Cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especial use of this, that that Thought which thinks so, That is vain; and if That be vain, then his other Thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be real, and relied upon. And so we do: Those religious thoughts which are fent into us to condemn and disrepute the Thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the only Dreams: and so all those Instruments which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of Impiety are rendred ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or (which happens most commonly) by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, That we are ignorant of the things of God.

We make Religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole year; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of Holy Living; we reduce Religion to the Believing of a few Articles, and doing nothing that is confiderable; we pray feldom, and then but very coldly, and indifferently; we Communicate not so often as the Sun salutes both the Tropicks; we profess Christ, but dare not die for him; we are factious for a Réligion, and will not live according to its Precepts; we call our felves Christian, and love to be ignorant of many of the Laws of Christ, lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a Holy Life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a surious inconfiderate person, running after the wild-fires of the night, over Rivers, and Rocks, and Precipices, without Sun or Star, or Angel or Man to guide him; all that, and ten thousand times worse, may you suppose to be the certain lot of him who gives himself up to the conduct of a pasfionate blind Heart, whom no fire can warm, and no Sun can enlighten; who hates Light, and loves to dwell in the regions of Darkness. That's the first general mischief of the Heart, It is possessed with Blindness,

wilful and voluntary.

2. But the Heart is Hard too. Not only Folly, but Mischief also is bound up in the Heart of Man. If God strives to soften it with forrow and sad Accidents, it is like an Oxe, it grows callous and hard. Such a heart was Pharaoh's. When God makes the Clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the Clouds, and, like the male-contents in Galba's time, Tristitiam simulamus, Contumacia propiores, We seem sad and troubled, but it is doggedness and murmur. Or else if our fears be pregnant, and the Heart yielding, it finks low into pufillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so imparient in a sadness, that God

is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet when the Sun thines upon us, our Hearts are hardned with that too; and God feems SERM. to be at a los, as if he knew not what to do to us. War undoes us, and makes us violent; Peace undoes us, and makes us wanton: Prosperity makes us Proud; Advertity renders us Impatient : Plenty diffolves us, and makes us Tyrants; Want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious.

Πῶς ἔν τις ἄν σώσειέ τοι ἀυτὴν πόλιν,
Η μήτε χλαΐνα, μήτε σισόρα ξυμφέρει;

No fortune can fave that City to whom neither Peace nor War can do advantage. And what is there left for God to mollifie our Hearts, whose temper is like both to wax and dirt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens; and contradictory Accidents produce no change, fave that the Heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of Providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

1. The Heart of man is strangely Proud. If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish our selves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not; or envious, and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then Vox populi Vox Dei, Fame is the voice of God. If we be praifed but by few, then Satis unus, satis nullus; we cry, These are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the People. But if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of no body, and think well only of our selves. And then'we have such beggarly arts, such tricks to cheat for praise. We enquire after our faults and failings, only to be told we have none, but did excellently; and then we are pleased: we rail upon our actions, only to be chidden for so doing; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of our felves, which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, Humility it self makes us proud; so false, so base is the heart of man. For Humility is so noble a Vertue, that even Pride it self puts on its upper Garment: And we do like those who cannot endure to look upon an ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a Picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigie. And Æsop's Picture was sold for two talents, when himself was made a Slave at the price of two Philippicks. And because Humility makes a man to be honoured, therefore we imitate all its garbs and postures, its civilities and filence, its modesties and condescensions. And to prove that we are extremely proud in the midst of all this pageantry, we should be extremely angry at any man that should say we are proud; and that's a fure fign we are fo. And in the midst of all our Arts to feem Humble, we use devices to bring our selves into talk; we thrust our selves into company, we listen at doors, and, like the great Beards in Rome, that pretented Philosophy and strict life, Οθελίσκον καταπίοντες περιπατέμεν, We walk by the Obelisk, and meditate in Piazza's, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may cry out, ω μεγάλε φιλοσόφε! Behold! there goes an excellent man! He is very Prudent, or very Learned, or a Charitable person, or a good House-keeper, or at least very Humble.

2. The Heart of man is deeply in love with Wickedness, and with nothing else; against not only the Laws of God, but against his own Reason, its own Interest, and its own securities. For is it imaginable that a man, who knows the Laws of God, the rewards of Vertue, the curfed

and horrid effects of fin; that knows and confiders, and deeply fighs at SERM. the thought of the intolerable pains of Hell; that knows the joys of Heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for, and yet he certainly believes that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither; is it, I say, imaginable that this man should for a transient action forfeit all this hope, and certainly and knowingly incur all that calamity? Yea, but the fin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and bloud, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; and the discourses of Religion are concerning things Spiritual, separate and apt for Spirits, Angels, and Souls departed. To take off this also; We will suppose the man to consider, and really to believe, that the pleasure of the sin is fudden, vain, empty, and transient; that it leaves bitterness upon the tongue, before it is descended into the bowels; that there it is poyfon, and makes the Belly to swell, and the Thigh to rot; that he remembers, and actually considers, that as soon as the the moment of Sin is past, he shall have an intolerable Conscience, and does at the instant compare mo-ments with Eternity, and with horrour remembers that the very next minute he is as miserable a man as is in the world: Yet that this man should sin? Nay, suppose the sin to have no pleasure at all, such as is the fin of Swearing; nay, suppose it really to have pain in it, such as is the fin of Envy, which never can have pleasure in its actions, but much torment and consumption of the very heart: What should make this man fin fo for nothing, fo against himself, so against all Reason and Religion and Interest, without pleasure, for no reward? Here the Heart betrays it self to be desperately wicked. What man can give a reasonable account of such a man, who, to prosecute his revenge, will do himself an injury, that he may do a less to him that troubles him. Such a man hath given me ill language: ὅτε τὸν κεφαλὸν ἀλγει, ὅτε τὸν ὄφθαλκιον, ὅτε τὸν ἰσχίον, ὅτε τὸν αγεον απολύει, My Head akes not for his language, nor hath he broken y Thigh, nor carried away my Land: But yet this man must be requited. Well, suppose that. But then let it be proportionably; you are not undone, let not him be fo. Oh yes; for else my Revenge triumphs not. Well, if you do, yet remember he will defend himself, or the Law will right him; at least do not do wrong to your selfby doing him wrong: This were but Prudence, and Self-interest. And yet we see that the Heart of some men hath betrayed them to such furiousness of Appetite, as to make them willing to dye, that their enemy may be buried in the same Ruines. Jovins Pontanus tells of an Italian Slave, (I think) who being enraged against his Lord, watched his absence from home, and the employment and inadvertency of his fellow-fervants: he locked the doors and secured himself for a while, and ravished his Lady; then took her three Sons up to the battlements of the house, and, at the return of his Lord, threw one down to him upon the pavement, and then a fecond, to rend the heart of their fad Father, seeing them weltring in their bloud and brains. The Lord begg'd for his third, and now his only Son, promising pardon and liberty if he would spare his life. The Slave seemed to bend a little, and on condition his Lord would cut off his own Nose, he would spare his Son. The sad Father did so, being willing to suffer any thing rather than the loss of that Child. But as soon as he saw his Lord all bloudy with his wound, he threw the third Son and himself down together upon the pavement. The story is sad enough, and needs no Justre and advantages of forrow to represent it: But if a man fets himself down, and considers sadly, he cannot easily tell upon what sufficient inducement

ducement or what principle the Slave should to certainly, so horridly, to presently, and then so eternally rune himself. What could be propound SER & to himself as a recompence to his own so immediate. Tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the Revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him; we must confess our ignorance, and say, that The Heart of man is desperately wicked; and that is the truth in general, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.



For when the Heart of man is bound up by the Grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by Angels, tended by those Nurse-keepers of the Soul, it is not easie for a man to wander; and the evil of his Heart is but like the ferity and wildness of Lions whelps: But when once we have broken the hedge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the li-centiousness of an ungoverned age, it is wonderful to observe what a great inundation of mischief in a very short time will overflow all the banks of Reason and Religion. Vice first is pleasing then it grows easie, then delightful, then frequent, then babitual, then confirmed; then the man is impenitent, then he is obstinate, then he resolves never to repent, and then he is damned. And by that time he is come half way in this progress, he confutes the Philosophy of the old Moralists: For they, not knowing the vileness of man's Heart, not considering its desperate amazing Impiety, knew no other degree of wickedness but this, That men preferred Sense before Reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporal before an intellectual and eternal good; but they always concluded, that the first man must of necessity follow the last Dictate of the Understand, declaring an object to be good, in one sence or other. Happy men they were that were so Innocent, that knew no pure and perfect Malice, and lived in an age in which it was not easie to confine them. fute them. But belides that, now the Wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see, by too sad experience, that there are some sins proceeding from the Heart of man which have nothing but simple and un-mingled Malice; Actions of mere spite, doing evil because it is evil; finning without sensual pleasures, sinning with sensual pain, with hazard of our lives, with actual torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and present damnation; sins against the Holy Ghost, open hostilities, and professed enmities against God and all Vertue. I can go no farther, because there is not in the world or in the nature of things a greater Evil. And that is the nature and folly of the Devil: he tempts men to ruine, and hates God, and only hurrs himself and those he tempts, and does himself no pleasure, and some say he increases his own accidental torment.

Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me to represent the Falleness and Baleness of the Heart. 1. We are falle our selves, and dare not trust God. 2. We love to be deceived, and are angry if we be told so. 3. We love to feem vertuous, and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholick and impatient, and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things, and are careless of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures. 7. We believe things, not for their Reasons and proper Arguments, but as they serve our turns, be they true or false. 8. We long extremely for things that are forbidden us; and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily when it is taken from us. 9. We love our selves more than we love God : and yet we eat poisons daily, and feed upon Toads and Vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosom, and will not be brought to quit them; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but Vertue, which is

most honourable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all the means we can to make Death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busie in the faults of others, and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown our selves. 13. We worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of Greatness, and covetous of Wealth, and all that we get by it, is, that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of Clients run to us as to a Pool, which first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make our felves unfafe by committing wickedness, and then we add more wickedness to make us safe and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one courtesse that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain Slanderers, and without choice spread their calumnies; and we hug Flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the Abuses, and Impieties, and Deceptions of the Heart, as Chrysippus did the Oracular Lies of Apollo into a Table, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure of watchfulness and Religion. Indeed they are great and many; but the Grace of God is greater; and if iniquity abounds, then doth Grace superabound : and that's our comfort and our medicine, which we must thus use.

1. Let us watch our heart at every turn.

2. Denie it all its defires that do not directly, or by consequence, end in Godliness: At no hand be indulgent to its fondnesses and peevish ap-

3. Let us suspect it as an Enemy.

4. Trust not to it in any thing.
5. But beg the Grace of God with perpetual and importunate Prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils, and that he would throw the salutary Wood of the Cross, the merits of Christ's Death and Passion, into these salt waters, and make them healthful and

pleasant.

And in order to the managing these advices, and acting the purposes of this Prayer, let us strictly follow a Rule, and chuse a prudent and faithful Guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, apt and imitable. For without great Watchfulness, and earnest Devotion, and a prudent Guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sence which Plutarch affirmed of a man's body in the natural: That of dead Bulls arise Bees; from the carcasses of Horses Hornets are produced; but the body of Man brings forth Serpents. Our Hearts wallowing in their own natural and acquired curruptions will produce nothing but issues of Hell, and images of the old serpent the Devil, for whom is provided the everlafting burning.

Sermon

Sermon IX.

SERM.

THE

FAITH and PATIENCE of the SAINTS:

OR

The Righteous Cause oppressed.

1 Pet. 4. 17, 18.

For the time is come that Judgment must begin at the bouse of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?

18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?



O long as the world lived by fense, and discourses of natural Reason, as they were abated with humane infirmities, and not at all heightned by the Spirit and Divine Revelations; so long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate: and amongst the base-est and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was prostable; and he only wise, that was rich; and those men beloved of

God, who received from him all that might fatisfie their Lust, their Ambition, or their Revenge.

Et cole felices, miseros fuge : sidera terrà Ut distant, & slamma mari, sic utile recto.

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to Vertue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile Vertue and Misery, than to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their Reason with a little beam of Faith, or else heightned their Reason by wiser principles than those of vulgar understandings, and taught them in the clear glass of Faith, or the dim perspective of Philosophy, to look beyond the cloud; and there to spie that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of Heaven and the waters of Assistion. And according as the world grew more enlightned by Faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and forrows. God sometimes sent a light sire, and a pillar of a Cloud, and the brightness of an Angel, and the lustre of a Star, and the Sacrament of a Rainbow, to guide his people through their portion

of forrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: but as the Sun of SER M. Righteousness approached towards the Chambers of the East, and sent the harbingers of light peeping through the curtains of the night, and leading on the day of Faith and brightest Revelation; so God sent degrees of trouble upon wife and good tien, that now in the same degree in the which the world lives by faith, and not by Sense, in the same degree they might be she to live in Vertue even while the lived in trouble, and not reject to great a beauty because the goes in mourning, and hath a black Cloud of Cypress drawn before her face. Literally thus: God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant-world by temporal Prosperity; but by degrees changed his method, and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God, and the expectations of Heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their Enemies, and were to endure the contradiction of sinvers, and the immission of the sharpnesses of Providence and Divine **Oeconomy**

First, Adam was placed in a Garden of health and pleasure from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of natural Sorrows, which he and all his posterity till the Floud ran through : But in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them; they needed not fight for Empires, or places for their cattel to graze in they lived long, and felt no want, no flavery, no tyranny, no war; and the evils that happened were fingle, personal, and natural; and no violences were then done, but they were like those things, which the Law calls no provisions, so then there was no Law, but men lived free, and rich, an long, and they exercised no Vertues but natural, and knew no Pelicity natural: and so long their Prosperity was just as was their cause it was a natural instrument towards all that which the Happiness. * But this publick casiness and quiet the Sin; and unless God did compel men to do themselves undo themselves: and then God broke in upon them with a Floud deftroyed that generation, that the might begin the government of world upon a new stock, and bind Vertue upon mens spirits by

bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new Laws, and gave to Princes the power of the fwe and men might be punished to death in certain cases, and man's life w shortned, and slavery was brought into the world and the state of fervants: and then War began, and evils multiplied upon the face of the earth; in which it is naturally certain that they that are most violent and injurious prevailed upon the weaker and note innocent, we every Tyranny that began from Nimrod to this day, and every United, was a peculiar argument to shew that God began to teach the small. Vertue by suffering; and that therefore he suffered. Transies and Corrections to be in the world, and to be prosperous at the rights of men to be snatched away from their owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled Governments, and the sufferers he taught all the passive verand settled Governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive vertues of the Soul. For so God brings good out of evil, training Tyranny into the benefits of Government, and Violence into Vertues and Sufferings into Remards. And this was the second change of the world: Personal miferies were brought in upon Adam and his posterity, as a punishment of in in the first period; and in the second, publick extle were brought in by Tyrante and Durpers, and God suffered them as the fust elements of Vertue,

Vertue, men being just newly put to school to infant-sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christ's Line was not yet drawn forth; it began not to appear in what Family the King of Sufferings should descend, till Abraham's time; and therefore till then there were no greater fufferings than what I have now reckoned. But when Abraham's Family was chosen from among the many Nations, and began to belong to God by a special right, and he was defigned to be the Father of the Messias; then God found out a new way to try him, even with a found Affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved Isaac: but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham, was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, and therefore was also but a type of Sufferings. And excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature, and accident, we see no change made for a long time after; but God having established a Law in Abrabam's Family did build it upon promises of Health, and Peace, and Victory, and Plenty, and Riches; and so long as they did not prevaricate the Law of their God, so long they were prosperous: But God kept a remnant of Cayaanites in the land, like a rod held over them, to vex or to chastise them into obedience in which while they persevered nothing could hurt them; and that faying of David needs no other sence but the letter of indown expression, I have been young, and now am old; and yet I faw neper the righteous forfaken, nor his feed begging their bread. The godly gegrally were prosperous, and a good cause seldom had an ill end, and a bod man never died an ill death, till the Law had spent a great part of time, and it descended towards its declension and period. But that egreat Prince of Sufferings might not appear upon his Stage of Trageies without some sorerunners of sorrow, God was pleased to chuse out the good men, and honour them, by making them to become little of suffering. Isaiah, Jeremy, and Zachary were Martyrs of the out these were single deaths: Shadrac, Meshec and Abednego were burning Furnace, and Daniel into a den of Lions, and Suty of the godly. As the time drew nearer that Christ should be felt, to the fufferings grew bigger and more numerous: And Antiosaffed through the Red Sea of bloud into the bosome of Abraham; Christ came. And that was the third period in which the chandethod of God's Providence was perfected: for Christ was to do his cell work by Sufferings, and prinferings was to enter into blessedness; and by his busion he was made timee of the Catholick Church, and as the Head to the formult the man bees be: God made the same Covenant with us the man bees be: God made the same Covenant with us the same than for himself; that was not to be looked for; The stream mixture he above bit the same will be be as his Master: If the world perfectled him, they mill also perfectle us: And from the days of John the nantist the Kinedom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it the Baptist the Kingdom of Heaven Suffers violence, and the violent take it be force; not the violent doers, but the sufferers of violence: for though the old Law was established in the promises of temporal Prosperity; yet is founded in temporal Advertity; it is directly a Covenant of Sufficients and forrows; For now the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God. That's the sence and design of the Text; and I intend it as a direct Antimony to the common perswasions of tyrannous carnal and vicious men, who reckon nothing good but what is prospereus: For though that proposition had many degrees of truth in

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the beginning of the Law, yet the case is now altered, God hath esta-SERM. blished its contradictory; and now every good man must look for Persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by the sufferings and patience of holy persons: and as men do well, and suffer evil, so they are dear to God; and whom he loves most, he afflicts most, and does this with a delign of the greatest mercy in the world.

Joel 3. 10.

1. Then, the state of the Gospel is a state of Sufferings, not of temporal Prosperities. This was fore-told by the Prophets: A fountain shall go out of the house of the Lord, Or irrigabit torrentem spinarum, (so it is in the Vulgar Latin) and it shall water the torrent of thorns, that is, the state or time of the Gospel, which, like a Torrent, shall carry all the world before it, and like a Torrent shall be fullest in ill weather; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briers, sharp afflictions, temporal infelici-ties and persecution. This sence of the words is more fully explained in Maiah 32. 13. the Book of the Prophet Isa. Upon the ground of my people shall thorns and briers come up; how much more in all the houses of the City of rejoycing? Which Prophecy is the same in the style of the Prophets that my Text is in the style of the Apostles. The house of God shall be watred with the dew of Heaven, and there shall spring up briers in it: Judgement must be gin there; but how much more in the houses of the City of rejoycing? how much more amongst them that are at ease in Sion, that serve their desires, that satisfie their appetites, that are given over to their own hearts lust, that so serve themselves that they never serve God, that dwell in the City of rejoycing? They are like Dives, whose portion was in this life, who went in fine linnen, and fared deliciously every day: they indeed trample upon their briers and thorns, and fuffer them not to grow in their houses; but the roots are in the ground, and they are referved for fuel of with in the day of everlasting burning. Thus you see it was prophesied, now fee how it was performed: Christ was the Captain of our sufferings, and

> He entred into the World with all the circumstances of Poverty. He had a Star to illustrate his Birth; but a Stable for his bed-chamber, and a Manger for his Cradle. The Angels sang hymns when he was born 5 but he was cold and cried, uneafie and unprovided. He lived long in the trade of a Carpenter; He by whom God made the world had in his first years the business of a mean and ignoble trade. He did good whereever he went; and almost where-ever he went was abused. He deserved Heaven for his obedience, but found a Cross in his way thither: and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in the lap of ease, softness and a propserous fortune, He it was only that could deserve that, or any thing that can he good. But after he had chosen to live a life of vertue, of poverty and labour, he entred into a state of death; whose shame and trouble was great enough to pay for the fins of the whole world. And I shall chuse to express this Mystery in the words of Scripture. He died not by a fingle or a fudden death, but he was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world: For he was massacred in Abel, (saith Saint Paulinus,) he was tossed upon the waves of the Sea in the person of Noah; it was he that went out of his Country when Abraham was called from Charran, and wandred from his native foyl; He was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Sampson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Esay, cast into the dungeon with feremy. For all these were types of Christ suffering. And then his Pashon continued even after his Resurrection. For it is he that suffers in all his members; it is he that endures the contradiction of all sinners; it is

he began.

he that is the Lord of life, and is crucified again, and put to open frame in all the sufferings of his servants, and fins of Rebels, and defiances of Apo- SERM. states and Renegadoe's, and violence of Tyrants, and injustice of Usurpers, and the persecutions of his Church. It is he that is stoned in Saint Stephen, flayed in the person of Saint Bartholomen : he was roasted upon Saint Laurence his Grid-iron, exposed to Lions in Saint Ignation, burned in Saint Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood forty Martyrs of Cappadocia. Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis sua sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum, faid S. Hilary; The Sacrament of Christ's Death is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the forrows of Humanity.

All that Christ came for was, or was mingled with, Sufferings: For all those little joyes which God sent, either to recreate his Person, or to illustrate his Office, were abated or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in him the Covenant of Sufferings, than to refresh his Sorrows. Presently after the Angels had finished their Halletujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate Mothers of Betblebem for their dying Babes. God had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from Heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of Baptism, but he was delivered over to be tempted and affaulted by the Devil in the wilderness. His Transfiguration was a bright ray of Glory; but then also he entred into a cloud, and was told a fad ftory what he was to fuffer at Jerusalem. And upon Palm-Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into ferusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, he wet the Palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of Manna, or the little Pearls of Heaven that descended upon Mount Hermon; weeping in the midst of this triumph over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jeru-Salem. For, this Jesus was like the Rain-bow, which God set in the Clouds asa Sacrament to confirm a Promise, and establish a Grace; he was half made of the glories of the Light, and half of the moisture of a Cloud; in his best dayes he was but half triumph and half sorrow: he was sent to tell of his Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company or in the retinue of a showr, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person: that which concerns this question most, is, that he made for us a Covenant of Sufferings: His Doctrines were fuch as expresly and by consequent enjoyn and suppose Sufferings, and a state of Amiliation; His very Promises were Sufferings; his Beatitudes were Sufferings; his

For if we sum up the Commandments of Christ, we shall find Humility, Mortification, Self-denial, Repentance, Renouncing the world, Mourning, Taking up the Cross, Dying for him, Patience and Poverty, to stand in the chiefest rank of Christian Precepts, and in the direct order to Heaven: He that will be my Disciple must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. We must follow him that was crowned with thorns and forrows him that was drench'd in Cedron, nailed upon the Cross, that deserved all good and suffered all evil: That, is the sum of Christian Religion, as it distinguishes from all the Religions of the World. To which we may add the express Precept recorded by Saint James, [Be affifed, and mourn, and James 4. 9. weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping.]

Rewards, and his Arguments to invite men to follow him, were only taken from Sufferings in this Life, and the reward of Sufferings here-

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You see the Commandments: Will you also see the Promises? These they SERM. are. In the world ye shall have tribulation, in me ye shall have peace: And, Through many trebulations ye shall enter into Heaven: And, He that loseth father and mother, wives and children, houses and lands for my Names sake and the Gospel, shall receive a hundred fold in this life, with persecution; that's part of his reward : And, He chaftifeth every fon that he receiveth; and, If ye

Mat. 5.

be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards and not sons. These are some of Christ's Promises: Will you see some of Christ's Blessings, that he gives his Church? Bleffed are the poor: Bleffed are the hungry and thirsty: Bleffed are they that mourn : Bleffed are the humble : Bleffed are the perfecuted. Of the eight Beatitudes, five of them have temporal misery and meanness, or an afflicted condition, for their subject. Will you at last see some of the Rewards which Christ hath propounded to his servants, to invite them to follow him? When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me : When Christ is lifted up as Moses lift up the Serpent in the Wilderness, that is, lifted upon the Cross, then he will draw us after him. To you it is given for

Christ, (saith Saint Paul, when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Phi-Phil. 1. 29. lippians: Well, what is given to them? Some great favours furely; true) It is not only given that you believe in Christ, (though that be a great matter) but also that you suffer for him, that's the highest of your honour. And therefore saith S. James, My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations: And S. Peter, Communicating with the sufferings of Christ

1 Pet. 4. 13.

rejoyce : And Saint James again, We count them bleffed that have suffered : James 5. 11.

Heb. 2, 10.

I Pet. 4. 12.

2 Thes. 3. 5. And Saint Paul, when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians, useth this form of prayer; Our Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God, and in the Heb. 2. 10. patience and sufferings of Christ. So that if we will serve the King of Sufferings, whose Crown was of Thorns, whose Scepter was a Reed of scorn, whose imperial Robe was a Scarlet of mockery, whose Throne was the Cross; we must serve him in sufferings, in Poverty of spirit, in Humility and Mortification; and for our reward we shall have Persecution, and all its blessed consequents. Atque hoc est esse Christianum.

Since this was done in the green tree, what might we expect should be done in the dry? Let us in the next place confider how God hath treated his Saints and Servants in the descending Ages of the Gospel; That if the best of God's Servants were followers of Jesus in this Covenant of Susferings, we may not think it strange concerning the fiery tryal, as if some new thing had hapned to us. For as the Gospel was founded in Sufferings, we shall also see it grow in Persecutions: and as Christ's blood did cement the corner-stones, and the first foundations; so the blood and sweat, the groans and fighings, the afflictions and mortifications of Saints and Martyrs did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the

Building.

If we begin with the Apostles, who were to perswade the world to become Christian, and to use proper Arguments of invitations, we shall find that they never offered an Argument of temporal Prosperity; they never promised Empires and Thrones on earth, nor Riches, nor temporal Power: and it would have been foon confuted, if they who were whipt and imprisoned, banished and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised Sun-shine days to others, which they could not to Of all the Apostles there was not one that died a natural death but only Saint John; and did he escape? Yes: But he was put into a Cauldron of scalding lead and oil before the Port Latin in Rome, and scaped death by miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him scape the torture. And besides this, he lived long in Banishment, and

Tertul. S. Hieron.

that was worse than Saint Peter's chains. Sandin Petrus in vinculis, & Johannes ante Portam Latinam, were both daies of martyrdom, and SERM. Church-Festival. And after a long and laborious life, and the affliction of being detained from his Crown, and his forrows for the death of his fellow-Disciples, he died full of days and sufferings. And when S. Paul was taken into the Apostolate, his Commissions were signed in these words; I will shew unto him how great things he must suffer for my Name: Acts 9.16. And his whole life was a continual suffering. Quotidie morior was his Motto, I die daily; and his Lesson that he daily learned was, to know Christ Jesus and him crucified; and all his joy was to rejoice in the Cross of Christ; and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his Sufferings, and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished his own Sufferings for expiation of the world; yet there are issemuala Alilew, portions that are behind of the sufferings of Christ, which must be filled up by his body the Church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol: for in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the fame shall ye be also of the consolation. And therefore concerning S. Panl, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing, or but very little, in Scripture relating to his person and chances of his private life; but his labours and persecutions; as if the Holy Ghost did think nothing fit to

stand upon record for Christ but Sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the Divine Providence: here was the Case of Christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosperous, learned and full of wise men; the Gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit: God was on one fide, and the Devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their City; Babylon upon earth; Jerusalem from above: The Devil's City was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories, and cruelty; good news, and great wealth; conquest over Kings, and making Nations tributary: They bound Kings in chains, and the Nobles with links of iron 5 and the inheritance of the Earth was theirs: The Romans were Lords over the greatest parts of the world; and God permitted to the Devil the Firmament and increase, the Wars and the success of that people, giving to him an entire power of disposing the great changes of the world to as might best increase their greatness and power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman Greatness was a professed enemy to Christianity. And on the other side God was to build up Jerufalem, and the Kingdom of the Gospel ; and he chose to build it of hewen stone, cut and broken: The Apostles he chose for Preachers, and they had no Learning; Women and mean people were the first Disciples, and they had no power; the Devil was to lose his kingdom, he wanted no malice: and therefore he stirred up, and, as well as he could, he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of Barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the ob-Africay of the Jews, against this Doctrine and Institution, which preached and promised, and brought Persecution along with it. On the one fide there was Scandalum Crucis, on the other Patientia Santtoworld could not strangle Christianity. But so have I seen the Sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darkness, and without violence and noise climbing up the hill, hath made Night so retire, that its memory was lost in the joyes and spritefulness of the Morning: And Christianity without violence or armies, without refistance and self-preservation, without strength or humane Eloquence, without challenging of privileges or fighting against

Tyranny, without alteration of Government and scandal of Princes, with SERM. its humility and meeknes, with toleration and patience, with Obedience and Charity, with praying and dying, did infentibly turn the world into

Christian, and Persecution into Victory.

For Christ, who began, and lived, and died inforrows, perceiving his own Sufferings to succeed so well, and that for suffering death he was crowned with immortality, resolved to take all his Disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of his glory; knowing, God had opened no gate of Heaven but the narrow gate, to which the Cross was the key. And since Christ now being our High Priest in Heaven intercedes for us by representing his Passion, and the dolours of the Cross, that even in glory he might still preserve the mercies of his past Sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in him; he also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with the marks of the Lord Jesus: He hath perdestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son. And if under a head crowned with thorns we bring to God members circled with roles, and softness, and delicacy, triumphant members in the militant Church, God will reject us; he will not know us who are so unlike our elder brother: For we are members of the Lamb, not of the Lion; and of Christ's suffering part, not of the triumphant part: and for three hundred years together the Church lived upon blood, and was nourished with blood; the blood of her own children. Thirty three Bishops of Rome in immediate succession were put to violent and unnatural deaths; and so were all the Churches of the East and West built; the Cause of Christ and of Religion was advanced by the fword, but it was the fword of the persecutors, not of refisters or warriours: They were all baptized into the death of Christ; their very profession and Institution is to live like him, and when he requires it, to die for him; that is the very formality, the life and effence of Christianity. This, I say, lasted for three hundred years, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of Christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutors, and prevailed, till the Country, and the Cities, and the Court it felf was filled with Christians. And by this time the Army of Martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of Sufferers blunted the hang-man's sword. For Christ first triumphed over the Princes and Powers of the world, before he would admit them to serve him; he first felt their malice, before he would make use of their defence; to shew that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted Kings and Queens to be nurses of the Church.

And now the Church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the Martyrs so long began now to suck the milk of Queens. Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who means by suffering to perfect his Church, as himself was by the same instrument, was pleased now that Persecution did cease to inspire the Church with the spirit of Mortification and Austerity; and then they made Colleges of Sufferers, persons who, to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting fo much of it as was necesfary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by Patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of the Cross, the burthen of the Lord, by Self-denial, by Fastings and sack-cloth, and pernoctations in Prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the Religion, mingling it as

much as they could with the fuffering.

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the Prince of the Catholick Church, who was a man of Sufferings, and to whom

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whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have put on the armour of righteoujness, on the right hand and on the left: that is, in the sufferings of Persecution, or the labours of Mortification; in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own; by toleration, or Self-denial; by actual Martyrdom, or by aptness or disposition towards it; by dying for Christ, or suffering for him; by being willing to part with all when he calls for it, and by parting with what we can for the relief of his poor members. For know this, there is no state in the Church so serene, no days so prosperous, in which God does not give to his fervants the powers and opportunities of suffering for him; not only they that die for Christ, but they that live according to his Laws, shall find some lives to part with, and many ways to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucifie the old man and all his lusts, to mortifie a beloved fin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastly, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in Religion, and to chuse our side for Truth's sake, (not because it is prosperous, but because it pleases God) to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and openness, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the importunity and troublesome kindness of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame, to refuse worldby pleasures when they tempt your Soul beyond duty or safety, to take pains in the cause of Religion, the labour of love, and the crossing of your anger, peevilhness and morolity; these are the daily sufferings of a Christian; and if we perform them well, will have the same reward. and an equal fmart, and greater labour than the plain fuffering the Hang mans sword. This I have discoursed, to reptelent unto you that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christ's Sufferings; that God will shut no age nor no man from his portion of the Cross; that we cannot fail of the refult of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the Covenant of Sufferings. Judgement must begin at God's house, and enters first upon the sons and heirs of the Kingdom; and if it be not by the direct persecution of Tyrants, it will be by the direct persecution of the Devil, or infirmities of our own Flesh. But because this was but the secondary meaning of the Text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

Let no Christian man make any judgement concerning his condition or his cause by the external event of things. For although in the Law of Moses God made with his people a covenant of temporal Prosperity, and his Saints did bind the Kings of the Amorites and the Philistins in chains, and their Nobles with links of iron, and then, that was the honour which all his Saints had : yet in Christ Jesus he made a Covenant of sufferings. Most of the Graces of Christianity are suffering Graces, and God hath predestinated us to Sufferings, and we are baptized into Suffering, and our very Communions are symbols of our duty, by being the Sacrament of Christ's death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promifed only that he would be with us in tribulation, that he would give us his spirit to assist us at Tribunals, and his grace to despise the world, and to contemn riches, and boldness to consess every Article of the Christian Faith in the face of Armies and armed Tyrants. And he also promised that all things should work together for the best to his servants, that is, he would out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong iffue sweetness, and Crowns and

Scepters

Scepters should spring from Crosses, and that the Cross it self should stand SERM. upon the Globes and Scepters of Princes; but he never promifed to his fervants, that they should pursue Kings and destroy Armies, that they should reign over Nations, and promote the cause of Jesus Christ by breaking his Commandement. The shield of Faith, and the sword of the Spirit, the armour of Righteousness and the weapons of spiritual warfare, these are they by which Christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possess the chairs of Doctors, and the thrones of Princes, and the hearts of all men. But men in all ages will be tampering with shadows and toys. The Apostles at no hand could indure to hear that Christ's Kingdom was not of this world, and that their Master should die a fad and shameful death; though that way he was to receive his Crown, and enter into glory. And after Christ's time, when his Disciples had taken up the Cross, and were marching the Kings high-way of Sorrows, there were a very great many, even the generality of Christians for two or three Ages together, who fell a-dreaming that Christ should come and reign upon earth again for a thousand years, and then the Saints should reign in all abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it till after the Resurrection; in the mean time took up their Cross, and followed after their Lord, the King of Sufferings. But now-a-days we find a generation of men who have changed the Covenant of Sufferings into victories and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their Christianity by their good fortunes; as if Christ had promised to his servants no Heaven hereaster, no Spirit in the mean time to refresh their forrows; as if he had enjoyned them no pasfive graces; but as if to be a Christian and to be a Turk were the same Mahomet entered and possessed by the Sword: Christ came by the Cross, entered by Humility; and his Saints possess their souls by patience.

God was fain to multiply Miracles to make Christ capable of being a man of forrows: and shall we think he will work Miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together they are not worthy to be compared : and shall we, with Dives, chuse our portion of good things in this life? If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive his glory? it is in vain to think we shall obtain glories at an easier rate, than to drink of the brook in the way in which Christ was drenched. When the Devil appeared to Saint Martin in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ; he answered, Christus non nist in Cruce apparet suis in hac vita. And when Saint Ignatius was newly tied in a chain to be led to his Martyrdom, he cried out, Nunc incipio esse Christianus. And it was observed by Minutius Felix, and was indeed a great and excellent truth, Omnes viri fortes quos Gentiles pradicabant in exemplum, arumnis suis incliti floruerunt; the Gentiles in their whole Religion never propounded any man imitable, unless the man were poor or persecuted. Brutus stood for his Country's Liberty, but lost his army and his life: Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth: Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall upon the oppressed and the injured; he died together with his party.

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.

And if God thus dealt with the best of Heathens, to whom he had made

no clear revelation of immortal recompences; how little is the Faith and how much less is the Patience of Christians, if they shall think much to SER M. fuffer forrow, fince they so clearly see with the eye of Faith the great things which are laid up for them that are faithful unto the death & Faith is uscless, if now in the midst of so great pretended lights we shall not dare to trust God, unless we have all in hand that we desire; and suffer nothing, for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of Faith: yet our Lord Jesus, concerning whose Passions the Gospel speaks much, but little of his Glorisications; whose shame was publick, whose pains were notorious, but his joys and transfigurations were fecret, and kept private; he who would not fuffer his Holy Mother, whom in great degrees he exempted from Sin, to be exempted from many and great Sorrows; certainly intends to admit none to his Refurrection but by the doors of his Grave, none to Glory but by the way of the Cross. If me be planted into the likeness of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection, else on no terms. Christ took away sin from us, but he left us our share of Sufferings; and the Cross, which was first printed upon us, in the waters of Baptism, must for ever be born by us in Penance, in Mortification, in Self-denial, and in Martyrdom, and Toleration, according as God shall require of us by the changes of the world, and the condition of the

Church. For Christ considers nothing but Souls, he values not their Estates or Bodies, supplying our want by his providence; and we are secured that our Bodies may be killed, but cannot perish, so long as we preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ our Captain hangs naked upon the Cros: our fellow-souldiers are cast into prison, torn with Lions, rent in funder with Trees returning from their violent bendings, broken upon Wheels, rosted upon Grid-irons, and have had the honour not only to have a good Cause, but also to suffer for it; and by Faith, not by Armies, by Patience, not by fighting, have overcome the world. Et sit anima mea cum Christianis; I pray God my soul may be among the Christians. And yet the Turks have prevailed upon a great part of the Christian world, and have made them slaves and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous: but when the Christians are so, then they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their Interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds or poverty, change or fcorn, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great success to support their persons and their pretence; for nothing but Innocence and Christianity can flourish in a Persecution. fum up this first discourse in a word: In all the Scripture, and in all the Authentick stories of the Church, we find it often that the Devil appeared in the shape of an Angel of light, but'was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted Sufferer. Say no more therefore, as the murmuring Ifraelites faid, If the LORD be with us, why have these evils apprehended ws? for if to be afflicted be a fign that God hath forfaken a man, and refuses to own his Religion or his Question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murthers the innocent, and puts the fatherless to death, and follows Providence by doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God fuffers him, he, I say, is the only Saint and Servant of God. and upon the same ground the Wolf and the Fox may boast when they scatter and devour a flock of Lambs and harmless Sheep.



Jer. 12.1,2.

SERMON

PART II.

T follows now that we enquire concerning the Reasons of the Divine Providence in this Administration of affairs, so far as he hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of his counsels and predestinations. And for such an enquiry we have the president of the Prophet Jeremy; Rightcons art thon, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let us talk to thee of thy Judgements. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root: they grow, yea they bring forth fruit. Concerning which in general the Prophet Malachy gives this account, after the same complaint made: And now we call the proud happy; and Mal.3.14, &c. they that work wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt God are even de-

livered. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkned and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his Name. And they shall be mine (saith the Lord of Hosts) in that day when I bind up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth bim. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. In this interval, which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoyce who shall weep for ever; and they that fow in tears shall have no cause to complain, when God gathers all the mourners into his Kingdom, they shall reap with joy.

For Innocence and Joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And Joy went not first, but when Innocence went away, Sorrow and Sickness dispossessed Joy of its habitation; and now this world must be always a scene of forrows, and no Joy can grow here but that which is imaginary and phantastick. There is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world, but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves in the hopes and deligns of iniquity. He that covets his neighbour's wife or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and curfed, to be a beaft and dye, or to lye wallowing in his filthiness: But those holy souls who are not in love with the Leprosie and the Itch for the pleasure of scratching, they know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of Paradise; and that Sorrow which was brought in by fin, must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of Innocence: the same instant that quits us from fin and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world. In the mean

God afflicts the godly, that he might manifest many of his Attributes, and his fervants exercise many of their Vertues.

Nec Fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes, sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur: seisicet est aliud quod nos cogátque regátque Majus, é in proprias ducat mortalia leges. SERM. X.

For, without the Sufferings of Saints God should lose the glories of 1. Bringing good out of evil: 2. Of being with us in tribulation: 3. Of sustaining our infirmities: 4. Of triumphing over the malice of his enemies. 5. Without the suffering of the Saints, where were the exaltation of the Cross, the conformity of the members to Christ their Head, the Coronets of Martyrs? 6. Where were the trial of our Faith? 7. Or the exercise of Long-suffering? 8. Where were the opportunities to give God the greatest love? which cannot be but by dying and suffering for him. 9. How should that which the World calls folly prove the greatest wisdom? 10. And God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? 11. By the suffering of Saints, Christian Religion is proved to be most excellent; whilst the iniquity and cruelty of the adversaries proves the Illecebra Setta, as Tertullian's phrase is; it invites men to confider the secret excellencies of that Religion for which and in which men are so willing to die: for that Religion must needs be worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortunes. 12. That a mans nature is passible, is its best advantage; for by it we are all redeemed: by the passiveness and sufferings of our Lord and Brother we were all rescued from the portion of Devils; and by our suffering we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of Angels; who indeed can sing God's praise with a fweeter note, and obey him with a more unabated will, and execute his commands with a swifter wing and a greater power; but they cannot die for God, they can lose no lands for him; and he that did so for all us, and commanded us to do fo for him, is ascended far above all Angels, and is Heir of a greater glory. 13. Do this, and live, was the Covenant of the Law; but in the Gospel it is, Suffer this, and live: He that for saketh house and land, friends and life, for my sake, is my Disciple. 14. By the Sufferings of Saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errours to climbe up into Herefies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

-- ταθών ή τι νήπιω έγνω.

Affliction makes a fool leave his folly. If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly: But if Augustus Cafar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, bic diadema.

And in giving Physick we always call that just and fitting that is useful and profitable: no man complains of his Physician's Iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body; if the Belly be punished to chastise the flouds of Humor, and the evils of a Surseit. Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for a medicine; and God is then very careful of thy Soul, when he will suppress every of its evils, when it first discomposes the order of things and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee, if a Persecution draws thee from the vanities of a former Prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? What loss is it? what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil than the greatest

greatest of sufferings? God smites some at the beginning of their sin; SERM. others not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say that God is flack in punishing, and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous; for they find that God is apt enough to strike: and therefore, that he strikes them, and strikes not the other, is not defect of Justice, but because there is not Mercy in store for them that fin and 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to his servants: but then we must not call that a misery, which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because he hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envy that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: But if God forbear the wicked, that by his long sufferance they may be invited to Repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted Saints, thus: For if God be so gracious to the wicked, how much more is he to the godly? And if sparing the wicked, be a mercy; then, smiting the godly being the expression of his greater kindness, Affliction is of its felf the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindness for the persecutors, so much as to invite them by kindness; how much greater is his love to them that are persecuted? And therefore his entercourse with them is also a greater favour; and indeed it is the furer way of securing the duty: fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it. Fair means are more apt to be abused than harsh Physick; that may be turned into wantonness, but none but the impudent and grown sinners despise all God's Judgements; and therefore God chuses this way to deal with his erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great Salvation. And yet if God spares not his children, how much less the reprobates? and therefore as sparing the latter commonly is a fad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16. For by this Oeconomy God gives us a great argument to prove the Refurrection, fince to his Saints and servants he assigns Sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of Vertue; it may be its instrument and hand-maid, but not its reward; and therefore it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life : For if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable : It is St. Paul's argument to prove a beatifical Resurrection. And we therefore may learn to estimate the state of the afflicted godly to be a mercy great, in proportion to the greatness of that reward which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

Nunc & damna juvant, sunt ipsa periculi tanti: Stantia non poterant tecta probare Deos.

It is a great matter, and infinite bleffing to escape the pains of Hell; and therefore that condition is also very bleffed which God fends us to create and to confirm our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The Sufferings of the Saints are the summe of Christian Philosophy: they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of Heaven; whiles God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our Country, where God shall be our portion, and Angels our companions, and Christ our perpetual Feast, and never-ceasing joy shall be our conditions, and entertainment. O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions! But he that is uneasse in his body, and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his perfon, discomposed in his designs, who finds no pleasure, no rest here,

Ecclus.

will be glad to fix his heart where only he shall have what he can desire. and what can make him happy. As long as the waters of Persecutions are SER M. upon the earth, so long we dwell in the Ark; but where the land is dry, the Dove it self will be tempted to a wandring course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18. Christ nourisheth his Church by Sufferings. 19. He hath given a single blefting to all other Graces; but to them that are persecuted he hath promised a double one : it being a double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, Matth. 5.12. and then to be afflicted like him. 20. Without this, the miracles of patience, which God hath given to fortifie the spirits of the Saints, would signifie nothing. Nemo enim tolerare tanta velit sine causa, nec potuit sine Deo: As no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God; and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not Sorrow and persecution. And therefore without this condition of Suffering, the Spirit of God should lose that glorious Attribute of The Holy Ghost the Comforter. 21. Is there any thing more yet? Yes. They that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ, shall sit upon the thrones, and judge the twelve Tribes of Israel; so said Christ to his Disciples. Nay the Saints shall judge Angels, (saith Saint Paul:) well therefore might Saint Paul say. I rejouce exceeding (saith Saint Paul:) well therefore might Saint Paul say, I rejoyce exceeding-ly in tribulation. It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoyce exceedingly; and so it was. For since Patience is necessary that we receive the Promise, and Tribulation does work this; For a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope, even an exceeding weight of glory; We have no reason to think it strange concerning the fiery trial as if it were a strange thing. It can be no hurt. The Church is like Moses's bush, when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed, but made full of miracle, full of splendor, full of God: and unless we can find something that God cannot turn into joy, we have reason not only to be patient, but rejoyce, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause : For, Love is the Soul of Christianity, and Suffering is the foul of Love. To be innocent, and to be persecuted, are the body and foul of Christianity. I John your brother, and partaker in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus, said S. John: those were Rev. 1.92 the titles and ornaments of his profession: That is, I John your fellow-Christian; that's the Plain-song of the former Descant. He therefore that is troubled when he is afflicted in his outward man, that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds upon the ruines of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a beggar, and a sinner be rich with oppresfion; that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied and unrelieved; may as well wonder that carrion-crows should feed themselves fat upon a fair horse, far better than themselves; or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted into glory. That man knows nothing of Nature, or Providence, or Christianity, or the rewards of Vertue, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of his loving kindness, or the rewards of Heaven, or the glorification of Christ's exalted Humanity, or the precepts of the Gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of God's dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings in the cause of Rightes oulness, for the securing of a Vertue, for the imitation of Christ and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwife; the world may as well cease to be measured by Time, as good men to suffer Affliction. I end this point with the words of S. Paul, Let as many as are perfect be thus minded and if any man be otherwise minded, Phil. 3.191

O God also will reveal this unto you; this, of the Covenant of Sufferings, con-SERM. cerning which the old Prophets and holy men of the Temple had many thoughts of heart : but in the full Sufferings of the Gospel there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the Sufferings. I have now given you an account of some of those Reasons why God hath so disposed that at this time, that is, under the period of the Gospel, Judgement must begin at the house of God: and they are either The elah, or Sommaslai, or μαςτύριον, or imitation of Christ's λύτρον, Chastisements or trials, or Martyr-

dom, or a conformity to the Sufferings of the Holy Jesus.

But now besides all the premisses, we have another account to make concerning the Prosperity of the wicked: For if judgement first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? that is the question of the Apostle, and is the great instrument of comfort to persons ill-treated in the actions of the world. The first Ages of the Church lived upon Promises and Prophecies; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and the others are of a continual and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day, therefore we and all the following Ages live upon Promises and Experience. And although the servants of God have suffered many calamities from the tyranny and prevalencie of evil men their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamental Truths of Christianity, That all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the Persecutions of the god-ly able to make a good man miserable, nor yet their sadnesses arguments of God's displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his business; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them: For who are fit to be hangmen and executioners of publick wrath, but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder that they whose cause wants Reason, should betake themselves to the Sword? that what he cannot perswade, he may wrest? Only we must not judge of the things of God by the measures of men. Ta avecumva, the things of men have this world for their stage and their reward; but the things of God relate to the world to come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and by the end of all; not by events intermedial, which are varied by a thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were unprosperous, (as most certain they are) and if all good persons were temporally bleffed, (as most certainly they are not;) yet this would not move us to become vertuous. If an Angel should come from Heaven, or one arise from the dead and preach Repentance, or Justice, and Temperance, all this would be ineffectual to those, to whom the plain Doctrines of God delivered in the Law and the Prophets will not suffice.

For why should God work a fign to make us to believe that we ought to do justice; if we already believe he hath commanded it? No man can need a Miracle for the confirmation of that which he already believes to be the command of God: And when God hath expresty bidden us to obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, the King as supreme, and his Deputies as sent by him; it is a strange insidelity to think, that a Rebellion against the Ordinance of God can be sanctified by the success and prevalencie of them that destroy the Authority, and the Person, and the Law, and the Religion. The fin cannot grow to its height if it be crushed at the beginning; unless it prosper in its progress, a man cannot easily fill up the measure of his iniquity: but then that sin swells to its fulness by prosperity, and grows too big to be suppressed without a miracle, it is so far from excusing or lessening the sin, that nothing doth so note the sin as

it. It is not Vertue, because it is prosperous; but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be so great.

SERM.

Non impune licet, nise dum facis-

X.

A little crime is fure to fmart; but when the finner is grown rich, and prosperous, and powerful, he gets impunity,

Jusque datum sceleri-

But that's not Innocence: and if Prosperity were the voice of God to approve an action, then no man were vicious but he that is punished, and nothing were Rebellion but that which can be easily suppressed, and no man were a Pirate but he that robs with a little vessel, and no man could be a Tyrant but he that is no prince, and no man an injust invader of his neighbours rights but he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and loud, then it calls to Heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long a growing, when it hath thrived under the Devil's managing; when God hath long suffered it, and with patience, in vain expecting the Repentance of a sinner. He that treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished and a thriving finner: but then it is the fin that thrives, not the man: and that is the miltake upon this whole question; for the sin cannot thrive, unless the man goes on without apparent punishment and restraint. And all that the mangets by it is, that by a continual course of sin he is prepared for an intolerable ruine. The spirit of God bids us look upon the end of these men; not the way they walk, or the instrument of that pompous death. When Epaminondos was asked which of the three was happiest, himself, Chabrios, or Iphicrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had feen the Vandals besiege the City of Hippp, and had known the barbaroul-ness of that unchristened people, and had observed that S. Augustine with all his prayers and vows could not obtain peace in his own days, not so much as a reprieve for the Perfecution, and then had observed S. Angufine die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible than the reward of his Piety and holy Religion. When Lewis surnamed Pine went his Voiage to Palastina upon a holy end, and for the glory of God, to fight against the Saracens and Turks and Mamaluks, the world did promise to themselves that a good Cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man; but the event was far otherwise s his Brother Robert was killed, and his Army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the Money which by his Mother was sent for his redemption, was cast away in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last Town the Christians had in Egypt, and brought home the Cross of Christ upon his shoulder in a real pressure and participation of his Master's sufferings. When Charles the fifth went to Algier to suppress Pirates and unchristened Villains, the cause was more consident than the event was prosperous: and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storm, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when Reli-gious persons rose to Mattins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers: But the providence of God trod upon those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery; his Navy was beat in pieces, and his design ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever Cause more baffled than the Christian Cause by the Turks in all Asia and Africa, and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a

calamity ? What Prince was ever more unfortunate than Henry the fixth SERM. of England? and yet that Age faw none more pious and devout. the Title of the House of Lancaster was advanced against the right of Tork for three descents. But then what was the end of these things? The perfecuted men were made Saints, and their memories are preferved in honour, and their fouls shall reign for ever. And some good men were ingaged in a wrong Cause, and the good Cause was sometimes managed by evil men; till that the suppressed Cause was lifted up by God in the hands of a young and prosperous Prince, and at last both interests were satisffied in the conjunction of two Roses, which was brought to iffue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the Divine Providence. And there is no Age, no History, no State, no great Change in the world, but hath ministred an example of an afflicted truth, and a prevailing sin. For I will never more call that finner prosperous, who, after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die and perish miserably; for at the fame rate we may envy the happiness of a poor Fisher-man, who while his nets were drying, slept upon the rock, and dreamt that he was made a King; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy, falls down from the tock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities, loses his little portion of pleasure and innocent solaces he had from the found sleep and little cares of his humble Cottage.

And what is the Prosperity of the wicked? To dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to dispatch, and great cares to master; these things are of themselves neither good nor bad. But confider, would any man amongst us, looking and considering before-hand, kill his lawful King, to be heir of all that which I have named? would any of you chuse to have God angry with you upon these terms? would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good would not chuse it. Would any of you die an Atheist, that you might live in plenty and power? I believe you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive upon the stock of a great sin. For if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his Soul up at a certain day, it may be 20 years hence, upon the condition he might for 20 years have his vain delires; should we not think that person infinitely miserable? Every prosperous thriving sinner is in the same condition; within these twenty years he shall be thrown into the

portion of Devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasie upon him, that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. And that God deferrs the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their fin, it may and does serve many ends of Providence and Mercy, but

serves no end that any evil man can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

Bias faid well to a vicious person, Non metuo ne non sis daturus pænas, sed metuo ne id non sim visurus; He was sure the man should be punished, he was not fure he should live to see it. And though the Messenians that were betrayed and flain by Aristocrates in the battel of Cyprus were not made alive again; yet the Justice of God was admired, and Treason infinitely disgraced, when twenty years after the Treason was discovered, and the Traitor punished with a horrid death. Lycifcus gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipt in water, might rot off, if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did

not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did. Slay them not, O Lord, lest my people forget it, (saith Da- SER M. vid.) If punishment were instantly and totally inslicted, it would be but a sudden and single document: but a slow and lingring Judgment, and a wrath breaking out in the next Age, is like an Universal Proposition, teaching our posterity that God was angry all the while, that he had a long indignation in his breaft, that he would not forget to take vengeance. And it is a Demonstration, that even the prosperous sins of the prefent Age will find the same period in the Divine revenge, when men fee a Judgement upon the Nephews for the fins of their Grand-fathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the days of their Ancestors.

We know that when in Henry the eighth or Edward the fixth's days, fome great men pulled down Churches and built Palaces, and robb'd Religion of its just incouragements and advantages; the men that did it were facrilegious: and we find also that God hath been punishing that great fin ever fince; and hath displayed to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes, against whom God was so angry that he would shew his displeasure for a hundred years together. When Herod had killed the Babes of Bethlehem, it was seven years before God called him to an account: But he that looks upon the end of that man, would rather chuse the fate of the oppressed Babes, than of the prevailing and triumphing Tyrant. It was forty years before God punished the Jews, for the execrable murther committed upon the person of their King, the Holy Jesus; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attri-buted it to their killing of S. James their Bishop, and seemed to forget the greater crime. But, non eventu rerum, sed fide verborum stamus; We are to stand to the truth of God's word, not to the event of things: Because God hath given us a Rule, but hath left the Judgment to himself; and we die so quickly, (and God measures all things by his standard of Eternity, and 1000 years to God is as but one day) that we are not competent perfons to measure the times of God's account, and the returns of Judgment. We are dead before the arrow comes; but the man scapes not, unless his Soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. Ducunt in bonis dies suos, & in momento descendunt ad infernum, that's their fate; They spend their days Job 21.13. in plenty, and in a moment descend into bell. In the mean time they drink, and forget their forrow; but they are condemned: they have drunk their hemlock; but the poison does not work yet: the bait is in their mouths, and they are sportive; but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruine. And let no man call the man fortunate, because his Execution is deferr'd for a few days, when the very deferring shall increase and ascertain the condemnation.

But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing Tyrant, we should find even in the days of his joys such allays and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and a thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytick under a load of sables, and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body: and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapt about a sickly and an uneasie soul. Apollodorus was a Traitor and a Tyrant, & the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune; but knew not that he nourished Scorpions in his

breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with Spectres and SERM. images of death: his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of illusions; his fancy was abused with real troubles and phantastick images, imagining that he faw the Scythians flaying him alive, his Daughters like pillars of fire dancing round about a Cauldron in which himself was boiling, and that his heart accused it self to be the cause of all these evils. And although all Tyrants have not imaginative and phantaftick Consciences, yet all Tyrants shall die and come to Judgment; and such a man is not to be seared, not at all to be envied. And in the mean time can he be faid to escape who hath an unquiet Conscience, who is already designed for Hell, he whom God hates, and the people curse, and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many defire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it? Is this man a blessed man? Is that man prosperous who hath stollen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is fain to defend it with the greatest difficulty, and the greatest danger? Does not he drink more sweetly that takes his beverage in an earthen vessel, than he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts no body, and does not trust God for his fafety, but does greater wickedness only to escape a while unpunished for his former crimes? Auro bibitur venenum. No man goes about to poison a poor man's pitcher, nor lays plots to forrage his little Garden made for the Hospital of two Bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythogorean Herb-eaters.

- κα ισασιν όσω πλέον ήμισυ πανίδς, 'Ουδ' όσον εν μαλάχη τε κ ασφοδέλφ μέγ όνειαρ.

They that admire the happiness of a prosperous prevailing Tyrant, know not the felicities that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottages, and fmall fortunes.

A Christian, so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to Religion, is bold in all accidents, he dares die, and he dares be poor; but if the Persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholden to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the Riches, the less good they are, and by an over-valuing affection they become our danger and our fin.: But on the other side, Death and Persecution lose all the ill that they can have, if we do not let an edge upon them by our fears and by our vices. From our selves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may let their prices as we please: and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; and therefore that the prevailing Oppressor, Tyrant, or Persecutor is infinitely miserable. Only let God chuse by what instruments he will govern the world, by what instances himself would be served, by what ways he will chastise the failings, and exercise the duties, and reward the vertues of his servants. God sometimes punishes one sin with another; Pride with Adultery, Drunkenness with Murther, Carelesness with Irreligion, Idleness with Vanity, Penury with Oppression, Irreligion with Blasphemy, and that with Atheism: and therefore it is no wonder if he punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate persons to frame an Army; and Timoleon destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of fouldiers who themselves were sacrilegious; and Physicians use poifon to expel poisons; and all Commonwealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of Justice and Executions: we shall have no farther cause to wonder if God raises up the Assirian to punish the Israelites, and the Egyptians to destroy the Assyrians, and the Ethiopians to scourge the Egyptians ;

Egyptians 3 and at last his own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of Separation, in the day when he makes up his Jewels.

SERM.

πο ποτε κερουνοί Δίω, ñ
πο τοκόλων άλιω,
εί παντ' έφοςῶντες
κρύπουν έκκλοι; Soph. Elect.

God hath many ends of Providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men. By them he not only checks the beginning errours and approaching fins of his Predestinate; but by them he changes Governments, and alters Kingdoms, and is terrible among the fons of men. For fince it is one of his glories to convert evil into good, and that good into his own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of Providence: it becomes us only to dwell in duty, and to be filent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God; and let him chuse the time when he will prune his Vine, and when he will burn his thorns; how long he will smite his servants, and when he will destroy his enemies. In the days of the Primitive Persecutions, what prayers, how many fighings, how deep groans, how many bottles of tears did God gather into his repository, all praying for eale and dealiverances, for Halcyon-days and fine Sun-shine, for mursing fathers and nurling mothers, for publick affemblies and open and folemn facraments ! And it was three hundred years before God would hear their prayers : and all that while the perfecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe, and knew it not; and God kept for them the best wine until the list: they ventured for a crown, and fought valiantly; they were faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life; and they are honoured by God, by Angels, and by men. Whereas in all the prosperous Ages of the Church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of Saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary; scarce any made illustrious with a Miracle, which in the days of Suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the Persecution and troubles under it, we may please to remember that twenty years hence (it may be fooner, it will not be much longer) all our cares and our troubles shall be dead; and then it shall be enquired how we did bear our forrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause : and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the perfecuted; and the Perfecutors shall be shut out de mongst dogs and unbelievers.

He that shrinks from the yoke of Christ, from the burthen of the Lord, upon his death-bed will have cause to remember, that by that time all his Persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him but rest, and Crowns, and Scepters. When Lysimachus, impatient and overcome with Thirst, gave up his Kingdom to the Gete, being a captive, and having drank a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst now gone, he setched a deep sigh, and said, Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, loss so great a Kingdom! Such will be their case, who, being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth and an easie fortune: they shall find themselves miserable in the separations of Eternity, losing the glories of Heaven for so little a pleasure, illiberalis & ingrate voluptatis causa, as Plutarch calls it, for illiberal and ungrateful pleasure, in which when a man hath entred, he loses the rights and priviledges and honours of a good man, and gets

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nothing

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nothing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes, or necessary to SERM. any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he needs neither God nor man to be a revenger, having already under his splendid robe miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisie of his condition; being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vicious in their lives, and full of page-antry and out-sides, but in their death miserable, with calamities real, eternal and insupportable. And if it could be otherwise, Vertue it self would be reproached with the calamity.

> ei کی ف سفر عصری र्वे मा के हे हे किए किए, κείσεται τάλας. οί ή μη ποίλιν δώσες άντιφόνες δίκας, έξξοτ' αν αίδως, άποίντων T' Evoteen Donn's. Soph. Elect.

I end with the advice of Saint Paul; In nothing be terrified of your ad-Phil. 1. 28. versaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of Salvation, and that of God.

SERMON XI.

PART III.

Ut now that the perfecuted may at least be pitied, and affisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some Rules by which they may learn to gather grapes from their thorns, and figs from their thiftles; Crowns from the Cross, Glory from Dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer Persecution or forrow; no Rules can teach them to avoid that : but the Evil of the fuffering and the Danger must be declined, and we must use some such Spiritual Arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine. For it were a hard thing, first to be scourged, and then to be crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter: through the fiery tryal and purging fire of Afflictions to pass into Hell, that is intolerable, and to be prevented with the following Cautions; left a man suffer like a fool and a malefactor, or inherit damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

1. They that fuffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for him, let them do nothing against him. For certainly they think too highly of Martyrdom, who believe it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may give his body to be burned, and yet have no Charity; and he that dies without Charity dies without God; for God is Love. And when those who fought in the dayes of the Maccabees for the defence of true Religion, and were killed in those Holy Wars, yet being dead, were found having about their necks iseculada, or Pendants consecrated to Idols

of the Jamnenses; it much allayed the hope which, by their dying in so good a Cause, was entertained concerning their beatifical resurrection. SERM. He that overcomes his fear of death does well; but if he hath not also overcome his Lust, or his Anger, his baptism of blood will not wash him clean. Many things may make a man willing to die in a good Cause; publick reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a consident re-folution, and a masculine courage; or a man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: But nothing can make a man live well, but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their Religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity, if every good Cause could be managed by good men only; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good Cause, but never that a good Cause made those evil men good and holy. If the Governour of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving Christian Baptism, he had no more died a Martyr, than he lived a Saint. For dying is not enough, and dying in a good Cause is not enough; but then only we receive the crown of Martyrdom, when our death is the feal of our life, and our life is a continual testimony of our duty, and both give testimony to the excellencies of the Religion, and glorisie the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him; but it burns him if he be like stubble, cheap, light, and useless: for Martyrdom is the consummation of Love. But then it must be supposed that this Grace must have had its beginning, and its several stages and periods, and must have passed through labour to zeal, through all the regions of duty to the perfections of sufferings. And therefore it is a sad thing to observe, how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a Religion, or such a Cause; and though they dishonour their Religion, or weigh down the Cause with the prejudice of sin, believe all is swallowed up by one honorable name, or the appellative of one Vertue. If God had forbid nothing but Herefie and Treason, then to have been a Loyal man, or of a good Belief had been enough: but he that forbad Rebellion forbids also Swearing and Covetoulness, Rapine and Oppression, Lying and Cruelty. And it is a sad thing to see a man not only to spend his time, and his wealth, and his money, and his friends upon his Lust, but to spend his sufferings too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly fin devour his Martyrdom. He therefore that suffers in a good Cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour to which God hath called him; let him first deny his sins, and then deny himself, and then he may take up his cross and follow Christ; ever remembring, that no man pleases God in his death who hath walked perverily in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God must be indifferent what the instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the Cause, so it be a Cause of God; and indifferent in the Suffering, so it be of God's appointment. For some men have a natural aversation to some Vices or Vertues, and a natural affection to others. One man will die for his Friend, and another will die for his Money: Some men hate to be a Rebel, and will die for their Prince; but tempt them to suffer for the Cause of the Church, in which they were baptized, and in whose Communion they look for Heaven, and then they are tempted and fall away. Or if God hath chosen the Cause for them, and they have accepted it, yet themselves will chuse the Suffering. Right or wrong, some men will not endurea prison; and some that can yet chuse the heaviest part of the burthen, the pollution and stain of a sin, rather than lose their Money;

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and some had rather die twice than lose their Estates once. In this, our SERM. Rule is easie. Let us chuse God, and let God chuse all the rest for us; it being indifferent to us, whether by poverty or shame, by a lingring or a sudden death, by the hands of a Tyrant Prince or the despised hands of a base Usurper or a Rebel, we receive the Crown, and do honour to God and to Religion.

3. Whoever suffer in a Cause of God from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, let them not be too forward to prognosticate evil and death to their enemies; but let them solace themselves in the assurance of the Divine Justice, by general consideration, and in particular, pray for them that are our persecutors. Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of God against the Tyrians, and because he destroyed that City, God rewarded him with the spoil of Egypt: and it is not always certain that God will be angry with every man by whose hand affliction comes upon us. And sometimes two Armies have met and fought, and the wisest man amongst them could not say that either of the Princes had prevaricated either the Laws of God, or of Nations; and yet it may be some superstitious, easie and half-witted people of either side wonder that their enemies live so long. And there are very many cases of War concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in such cases he that yields and quits his Title rather than his Charity, and the care of so many lives, is the wifest and the best man; yet if neither of them will do fo, let us not decree Judgements from Heaven in cases where we have no word from Heaven, and thunder from our Tribunals where no voice of God hath declared the sentence. But in such cases where there is an evident Tyranny or Injustice, let us do like the good Samaritan, who dreffed the wounded man, but never pursued the thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the cross with nobleness, and look up to Jesus, who endured the cross, and despised the shame: but let us not take upon us the office of God, who will judge the Nations righteoufly, and when he hath delivered up our bodies, will rescue our Souls from the hands of unrighteous Judges. I remember in the story that Plutarch tells concerning the Soul of Thespe-sius, that it met with a Prophetick Genius, who told him many things that should happen afterwards in the world; and the strangest of all was this, That there should be a King, qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet; an excellent Prince and a good man should be put to death by a Rebel and Usurping power: and yet that Prophetick Soul could not tell that those Rebels should within three years die miserable and accursed deaths. And in that great Prophecy recorded by Saint Paul, That in the last days perillous times should come, and men should be traitours and selfish, having forms of godliness, and creeping into houses; yet he could not tell us when these men should come to final shame and ruine: only by a general fignification he gave this fign of comfort to God's persecuted servants, But they shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men; that is, at long running they shall shame themselves, and for the elects sake those days of evil shall be shortned. But you and I may be dead first: And therefore only remember, that they that with a credulous heart and a loose tongue are too decretory and enunciative of speedy Judgements to their enemies, turn their Religion into Revenge, and therefore do believe it will be so, because they vehemently desire it should be so; which all wife and good men ought to suspect, as less agreeing with that Charity which overcomes all the fins and all the evils of the world, and fits down and this in glory.

4. Do

2 Tim. 3.1,

2 Tim.3.93

4. Do not trouble your selves by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it: For reflex acts upon the Suf- SER M. fering it self can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience, to temptation, or to apoltalie. He that measures the grains and scruples of his Persecution, will soon sit down and call for ease, or for a reward; will think the time long, or his burthen great; will be apt to complain of his condition, or fet a greater value upon his person. Look not back upon him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the Crown that is fet before thee : and then confider, if the loss of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world; whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit; and if thy uneasie prison sets thy Soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of sufferings turns into crowns and scepters, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual and habitual, permanent and persevering. For as the Silk-worm eateth it self out of a feed to become a little worm; and there feeding on the leaves of mulberries, it grows till its coat be off, and then works it self into a house of filk; then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its filk for man, and dieth all white and winged in the shape of a flying creature: So is the progress of Souls. When they are regenerate by Baptilm, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of Scriptures, and the fruits of the Vine, and the joys of the Sacrament, they incircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and vertuous habits; then by leaving their blood, which is the Churches feed, to raile up a new generation to God, they leave a bleffed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into Angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their imployment was in this world to suffer it. Fiat voluntas tua is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification; Thy will be done upon us: and if from thence also we translate it into an active sence, and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of Christians, and shall receive the reward of Martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral aids and phantaltick affiltances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company: and so Phocian encouraged a timorous Greek condemned to die; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion: and when 40 Martyrs in Cappadocia suffered, and that a souldier standing by came and supplied the place of the one Apostate, who fell from his crown being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen Confessors, and turn'd them into consummate Martyrs. But if Martyrdom were but a phantaltick thing, or relied upon vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then very necessary to be affilted by images of things, and any thing less than the proper instruments of Religion: But since it is the greatest action of the Religion, and relies upon the most excellent Promises, and its formality is to be an action of Love, and nothing is more firmly chosen (by an after-election at least) than an act of Love; to support Martyrdom or the duty of Sufferings by falle arches and exteriour circumstances, is to build a tower upon the beams of the Sun, or to let up a wooden ladder to climb up to Heaven; the Soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy. And let no man hope to glorifie God and go to Heaven by a life of Sufferings, unless he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his choice, his pa-

tience, and confidence in the causes of Vertue and Religion, like beams, and SERM. warmth, and influence from the body of the Sun. Some there are that fall under the burthen, when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the Will in Patience and Resignation, but endeavour to lighten the burthen in imagination; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that relies upon them rushes into coldness, recidivation, and lukewarmness: and among all instances, that of the main question of the Text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and less severe persons.

Nullos effe Deos, inane cœlum Affirmat Calius ; probatque Quod se videt, dum negat hæc, beatum.

When men chuse a good Cause upon confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of Vertue or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost, when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and success to a greater evil : for they have not learned to distinguish a great growing sin from a thriving and pro-Sperous fortune.

Ulla si juris tibi pejerati Pana, Barine, nocuisset unquam; Dente si nigro fieres vel uno Turpior ungui 3

Crederem.

They that believe and chuse because of idle sears and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit Treason for fear of being blasted; may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidental hardnesses; and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and if the fancy of the standers by, or the hearing of a cock crow, can add any collateral aids to thy weakness, refuse it not: But let thy state of Sufferings begin with choice, and be confirmed with knowledge, and rely upon love, and the aids of God, and the expectations of Heaven, and the present sense of duty; and then the action will be as glorious in the event, as it is prudent in the enter-

prife, and religious in the profecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christ's School, and entered thee into a state of Sufferings, remember the advantages of that state: consider how unsavory the things of the world appear to thee when thou art under the arrest of death; remember with what comforts the Spirit of God affifts thy spirit; set down in thy heart all those intercourfes which happen between God and thy own Soul, the sweetnesses of Religion, the vanity of fins appearances, thy newly-entertained refolutions, thy longings after Heaven and all the things of God. And if God finishes thy persecutions with death, proceed in them: if he restores thee to the light of the world, and a temporal refreshment, change but the scene of Sufferings in an active life, and converse with God upon the fame principles on which in thy state of Sufferings thou didst build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not less in love with Heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy spirit be now as humble as before it was broken: and to what soever degree of sobriety or austerity thy suffering condition did enforce thee, if it may be turned into Vertue, when God restores thee, (because then it was necessary thou shouldest

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should entertain it by an after-choice) do it now also by a præelection; that thou may est say with David, It is good for me that I have been afflicted, SERM. for thereby I have learned thy Commandments. And Paphontina did not do his Soul more advantage, when he loft his right eye, and suffered his left knee to be cut off for Christianity, and the Cause of God, then that, in the days of Constantine and the Churches peace, he lived (not in the toleration, but) in the active piety of a Martyr's condition; not now a Confessor of the Faith only, but of the charity of a Christian. We may every one live to have need of these Rules; and I do not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it : and to whatsoever degree of Sufferings God shall call us, we see what advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we our felves may make of it. I now proceed to make use of all the former discourse, by removing it a little farther even into its utmost spiritual sense; which the Apostle does in the last words of the Text, [If the Righteom scarcely be saved, where shall the Wicked and the Sinner appear ?]

These words are taken out of the Proverbs, * according to the transla- *Chap. 11.31. tion of the Lxx. If the Righteons scarcely be safe. Where the word μολις implies that he is safe; but by intermedial difficulties: and only etal, he is safe in the midst of his Persecutions; they may disturb his rest, and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery Chariot to Elias; he is incircled with fire, and rare circumstances, and strange usages, but is carried up to Heaven in a robe of flames. And so was Noah safe when the Flood came; and was the great type and instance too of the verification of this proposition; he was o dinaio and dinaiovins unque, he was put into a strange condition, perpetually wandring, shut up in a prison of wood, living upon Faith, having never had the experience of being fafe in Floods. And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vellel, and every motion and dancing of the Barge seemed a danger, and made them cling fast upon their fellows; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sate under a tree, while a gentle wind staked the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade: And the unskilful, unexperienced Christian shrieks out when ever his vessel shakes, thinking it always a danger, that the watry pavement is not stable and resident like a rock; and yet all his danger is in himself, none at all from without: for he is indeed moving upon the waters, but fastned to a rock ; Faith is his Foundation, and Hope is his Anchor, and Death is his Harbour, and Christ is his Pilot, and Heaven is his Countrey; and all the evils of Poverty, or affronts of Tribunals and evil Judges, of fears and fadder apprehensions, are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise, and drive faster to the Harbour: and if we do not leave the Ship, and leap into the Sea; quit the interest of Religion, and run to the securities of the world; cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes; grow impatient, and hug a wave, and die in its embraces; we are as fafe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, than in a calm when we are befriended with the world.

2. But subhis may also signifie rard; If the Righteom is seldom safe: which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense. God fometimes sends Halcyon-dayes to his Church, and when he promised Kings and Queens to be their Nurses, he intended it for a bleffing; and yet this bleffing does often-times so ill succeed, that it is the greater bleffing of the two, not to give us that bleffing too freely. But μάλις, this is scarcely done; and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing

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languishing piety with such arguments as comply with our infirmities: and SERM. though it be a shame to us to need such allectives and infant-gauds, such which the heathen-world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need; God, who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as he corroborates our willing spirits with proper entertainments, so also he fupports our weak flesh, and not only chears an afflicted Soul with beams of light, and antepasts and earnests of glory, but is kind also to our man of flesh and weakness; and to this purpose he sends thunder-bolts from Heaven upon evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counfels, curfing their posterity, and ruining their families.

Heffod.

άλλοτε δε αὖτε H. The ye seater Sigur and hear, is one Teixo Η νέας εν πόνζω Κουίδης αποϊννύζαι αυτή.

Sometimes God destroys their Armies, or their Strong-holds, sometimes breaks their Ships. But this happens either for the weakness of some of his servants, and their too great aptness to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when he will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of his Providence; and yet if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, only Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous: and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger; but the other was as himself could wish it, rich, and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong, and amorous, and voluptuous, and so he fell; and though his fall

was, yet his recovery was not, upon record.

And yet the worlt of evils that happen to the godly is better, tempotally better, than the greatest external felicity of the wicked : that in all sences the question may be considerable and argumentative; If the Righteons scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear? if it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference. The godly man is timorous, and yet fafe; toffed by the feas, and yet fafe at anchor; impaired by evil accidents, and righted by divine comforts; made fad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence; abused by the world, and yet an heir of Heaven; hated by men, and beloved by God; loses one house, and gets an hundred; he quits a convenient lodging-room, and purchases a glorious Countrey; is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience; he fares hardly, and sleeps fweetly; he flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears; he is full of thought, but of no amazement : It is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted; he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good; and in the recompence of this he hath God for his Father, Christ for his Captain, the Holy Ghoft for his supporter 3 so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the Holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage; for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But though Paul and Silas fing Pfalms in prison, and under the hang-mans whips, and in an earth-quake; yet neither the Goaler, nor the perfecuting Magistrates could do so. For the prosperity of the wicked is like a Winter's Sun, or the Joy of a condemned drunkard; it is a forgetfulness of his present danger, and his suture sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency: He sits in the gates of the City, and judges others, and is condemned himself; he is honoured by the passers by, and is thought happy, but he fighs deeply; he heapeth up rickes, and can-

Or, The Righteous cause Oppressed.

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not tell who shall gather them; he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasse SERM. pillows which his thoughtful head hath discomposed; when he is waking he dreams of greatness, when he sleeps he dreams of spectres and illusions : he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace; and in every unjust purchase himself is the greatest loser.

"Os of new autos Edutar, avail super monoas, Καί τε σμικρόν έον, τό, τ' έπαχνωσεν φίλον ώτος.

Heffod.

For just upon his oppression or injustice he is turned a Devil, and God's enemy, a wolf to his brother, a greedy admirer of the baits of fishes, and the bread of Dogs; he is unfafe by reason of his sin: for he hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the Laws, the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person; and God and men, the Laws of Nations and private Societies stand upon their defence against this man: he is unfafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched and suspected, and it may be dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool, and leaves a curse to his posterity.

το δε τ' αμαυροτέρη γενεή μετόπω λέλειπαι,

Hefiod.

He leaves a generation of blacker children behind him; so the Poet describes the cursedness of their posterity: and their memory sits down to eternal ages in dishonour. And by this time let them cast up their accounts, and fee if of all their violent purchases they carry any thing with them to the grave but fin, and a guilty Confeience, and a polluted Soul; the anger of God, and the shame of men. And what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate for which thou diedit for ever?

> Audire est opera pretium, procedere rette Qui mechis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent; Utque illis multo corrupta delore voluptas, Atque hecrara, cadat dura inter sepe pericla,

And let but a sober answerer tell me, if any thing in the world be more distant either from goodness or happiness, than to scatter the plague of an accursed soul upon our dearest children; to make an universal curse; to be the fountain of a mischief; to be such a person whom our children and nephews shall hate, and despise; and curse, when they groan under the burthen of that plague which their fathers fins brought upon the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verifie the intent of my Text; If the righteous scarcely be saved, or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable,

> NÃN O' EZO HÁT QUTES EN ANDESTOIDI DINAIOS Είνν μήτ έμρε μός, έπει κακον ανδ κα δικαιον

Neither I nor my fon (faid the oldest of the Greek Poets) would be vertuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable. No not only in the end of affairs, and at Sun-let, but all the day long the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner is very miserable.

Pellitur

The Faith and Patience of the Saints:

SERM. XI. Pellitur à populo victus Cato; tristior ille est Qui vicit, faciésque pudet rapuisse Catoni: Namque hoc dedecus est populi, morúmque ruina. Non homo pulsus erat; sed in uno victa potestas Romanumque decus————

And there needs no other argument to be added but this one greattestimony; That though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom Affliction cannot make miserable,

> (Quis curam negat esse te Deorum, Propter quem suit innocens ruina?)

but turns unto their advantages: and that's the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed who have no portions in the blessings of Eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin, to whom even their Sun-shine brings a drought, and their fairest is their soulest weather: and that's the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows: and the wicked are such

whom Prosperity it self cannot make fortunate.

3. And yet after all this it is but $\mu \delta \lambda i \varsigma$ $\sigma \omega \xi \xi \tau \alpha i$, not $\mu \delta \lambda i \varsigma$ $\sigma \omega \theta h \sigma \tau \tau \alpha i$, he escapes but hardly here: it will be well enough with him hereaster. Is sac digged three Wells. The first was called Contention; for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the Well with his sword. The second Well was not altogether so hard a purchase, he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room and his fortune swelled, and he called his Well Enlargement. But his third he called Abundance; and then he dipt his foot in oyl, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man sirst some in tears, he sirst drinks of the bottle of his own tears, forrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: But if they pass through a Torrent, and Vertue becomes easie and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprittely by the visitations of God, and refreshment of his Spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

Της δ' άξετης ίδεᾶτα Θεοί προπαρείθεν έθημαν — μαμρές ή εξόρηος οίμος έπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τρηχύς το πρῶτον —

At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of Tyrants and unjust persons:

—— દેશમાં ઈ' લંદ તેમ લુદ પ્રાથમતા, Pui Sin ઈ' મેંત્રલાત ત્રદેશના, સ્વર્મેટ ત્રાફ દેશના.

The second days of Vertue are pleasant and easie in the midst of all the appendant labours. But when the Christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath simished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never ceasing selicities. And this is that which God promised to his people: I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer. So much as moments are exceeded by Eternity, and the sighing

Efav 41.8.

of a man by the joys of an Angel, and a falutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal Hal- SERM. lelujahs; so much are the forrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is described for them in the treasures of Eternity.

Their Sorrows can die, but so cannot their Joys. And if the bleffed Martyrs and Confessors were asked concerning their past Sufferings and their present Rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the Mercies of God, and in the Cross of the Lord Jesus. Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a Kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of forrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-cealing numeration; days without night, joys without forrow, fanctity without fin, charity without stain, possession without fear, fociety without envying, communication of joys without lessening : and they shall dwell in a blessed Countrey, where an enemy never entred, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David fay, Funes ceciderant mihi in praelaris, The cords of my Tent [my Ropes and the forrow of my Pilgrimage] fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage. And when Perfecution hews a man down from an high fortune to an eaven one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a Crown, and the Tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the Soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the Persecution, then he can but dismantle the Soul's prison, and let the Soul forth to flie to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments; the Executioner tore off their heirs, and rent their filken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin, yet the offender cryed out with most bit-ter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to his servants; he rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to Physick and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance. But if we would take the measures of Images, we must not take the height of the Base, but the proportion of the members; nor yet measure the estates of men by their big-looking supporter, or the circumstance of an exteriour advantage, but by its proper commenfuration in it self, asit stands in its order to Eternity: And then the godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution, ought to be relieved by us, but needs not be pitied in the sum of affairs. But since the two estates of the world are measured by Time and by Eternity, and divided by joy and forrow, and no man shall have his portion of joys in both durations; the state of those men is insupportably miserable who are fatted for flaughter, and are crowned like beafts for facrifice; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their purchases but by communications with others, and themselves have the least share, but themselves are alone in the misery, and the saddest dangers, and they possess the whole portion of forrows; to whom their prosperity. gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppress a neighbour, or to nurse a lust, to increase folly, and treasure up calamity. And did ever any man see, or

ftory tell, that any Tyrant Prince killed his Rods and Axes, his Sword SER M. of Justice, and his Inferial entigns of power? They shine like a Taper, to all things but it self. But we read of many Martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and saluted their hangman with great endearments; and yet, abating the incursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils: and such they are with which a wise and a good man may be in love. And till the finners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God and their portions of Eternity; till they can rejoyce in Death and long for a Resurrection, and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of Judgment; we must conclude that their glass-gems and finest pageantry, their splendid outsides and great powers of evil cannot make amends for that estate of misery which is their portion with a certainty as great as is the Truth of God, and all the Articles of the Christian Creed. Miserable men are they who cannot be blessed, unless there be no day of Judgment; who must perish, unless the word of God should fail. If that be all their hopes, then we may with a fad spirit and a soul of pity inquire into the Question of the Text, Where shall the ungodly and the suner appear? Even there where God's face shall never shine, where there shall be fire and no light, where there shall be no Angels, but what are many thousand years turned into Devils, where no good man shall ever dwell, and from whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. O my God let my Soul never come into their counsels, nor lie down in their forrows.

> and right the same room of their and their inc The state of

Sermon XII.

SERM.

MERCY of the DIVINE JUDGEMENTS:

OR,

God's Method in curing Sinners.

Romans 2. 4.

Despisest thon the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance?

Rom the beginning of Time till now, all effluxes which have come from God have been have come from God have been nothing but emana-tions of his Goodness cloathed in variety of circum-stances. He made man with no other design than that man should be happy, and by receiving derivations from his fountain of Mercy might reflect glory to him. And therefore God making Man for his own glory, made also a Paradise for man's use; and did him good, to invite him to do himself a greater: for God gave forth demonstrations of his power by instances of Mercy, and he who might have made ten thousand worlds of wonder and prodigy, and created man with faculties able only to stare upon and admire those miracles of mightiness, did chuse to instance his power in the effusions of Mercy, that at the same instant he might represent himself desirable and adorable, in all the capacities of amability; viz. as excellent in himself, and profitable to us. For as the Sun sends forth a benign and gentle influence on the seed of Plants, that it may invite forth the active and plastick power from its recess and secrecy, that by rifing into the tallness and dimensions of a Tree it may still receive a greater and more refreshing influence from its foster-father, the prince of all the bodies of Light; and in all these emanations the Sun it self receives no advantage, but the honour of doing benefits: So doth the Almighty Father of all the creatures; He at first sends forth his bleffings upon us, that we by using them aright should make our felves capable of greater; while the giving glory to God, and doing homage to him, are nothing for his advantage, but only for ours; our Duties towards him being like Vapours ascending from the earth, not at all to refresh the region of the clouds, but to return back in a fruitful and refreshing shower; and God created us, not that we can increase his felicity, but that he might have a subject receptive of felicity from him. Thus he causes us to be born, that we may be capable of his Bleffings; he causes us to be baptized, that we may have a title to the glorious Promises Evangelical; he gives us his Son, that

we may be rescued from Hell. And when we constrain him to use harsh SERM. courses towards us, it is also in mercy: he smites us to cure a disease; Mi. he sends us sickness, to procure our health. And as if God were all Mercy, he is merciful in his first design, in all his instruments, in the way, and in the end of the journey; and does not only shew the riches of his goodness to them that do well, but to all men that they may do well: He is good, to make us good; he does us benefits, to make us happy. And if we, by despising such gracious raies of light and heat, stop their progress and interrupt their design, the loss is not God's, but ours; we shall be the miserable and accurred people. This is the sence and paraphrase of my Text; Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, &c? Thou dost not know, that is, thou considerest not, that it is for farther benefit that God does thee this: the goodness of God is not a delign to serve his own ends upon thee, but thine upon him: The goodness of God leadeth

thee to Repentance.

Here then is God's method of curing man-kind, xeusetus, avoxu, μαμεοθυμία. First, Goodness, or inviting us to him by sugred words, by the placid arguments of temporal favour, and the propositions of excellent Promises. Secondly, ἀνοχὸ, at the same time. Although God is provoked every day, yet he does avexen, he tolerates our stubbornness, he forbears to punish; and when he does begin to strike, takes his hand off, and gives us truce and respite. For so ανοχή signifies laxamentum, and inducias too. Thirdly, μακροθυμία, still a long putting off and deferring his final destroying Anger, by using all means to force us to Repentance; and this especially by the way of Judgments; these being the last reserves of the Divine Mercy, and how-ever we esteem it, is the greatest instance of the Divine long-suffering that is in the world. After these instruments, we may consider the End, the strand upon which these land us, the purpose of this variety, of these labours and admirable arts, with which God so studies and contrives the happiness and salvation of man: it is only that man may be brought by these means unto Repentance, and by Repentance may be brought to eternal This is the treasure of the Divine goodness, the great and admirable efflux of the eternal beneficence, the TASTO XENSOTHIO, the riches of his goodness, which whosoever despises, despises himself and the great interest of his own Felicity; he shall die in his impenitence, and perish in his folly.

1. The first great Instrument that God chuses to bring us to him, is xgusdrus, profit, or benefit; and this must needs be first, for those instruments whereby we have a being are so great mercies, that belides that they are such which give us the capacities of all other mercies, they are the advances of us in the greatest instances of promotion in the world. For from nothing to something is an infinite space; and a man must have a measure of Infinite passed upon him, before he can God thanks for one bleffing, until he hath received many. But then God intends we should enter upon his service at the beginning of our days, because even then he is before-hand with us, and hath already given us great instances of his goodness. What a prodigy of favour is it to us, that he hath passed by so many forms of his creatures, and hath not set us down in the rank of any of them, till we came to be paulo minores Angelis, a little lower than the Angels? and yet from the meanest of them God can perfect his own praise. The deeps and the snows, the hail and the rain, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, they can

and do glorifie God, and give him praise in their capacity; and yet he gave them no speech, no reason, no immortal spirit, or capacity of eter- SER M. nal Blessedness: But he hath distinguished us from them by the absolute issues of his Predestination, and hath given us a lasting and eternal spirit, excellent organs of perception, and wonderful instruments of expression, that we may joyn in confort with the morning Star, and bear a part in the Chorus with the Angels of light, to fing Hallelnjab to the great Father of men and Angels.

But was it not a huge chain of mercies, that we were not strangled in the regions of our own natural impurities, but were fultained by the breath of God from perishing in the womb, where God formed us in secreto terra, told our bones, and kept the order of nature, and the miracles of creation; and we lived upon that which in the next minute after we were born would strangle us if it were not removed? but then God took care of us, and his hand of providence cloathed us and fed us. But why do I reckon the mercies of production, which in every minute of our being are alike continued, and are miracles in all sences, but that they are common and usual? I only defire you to remember, that God made all the works of his hands to serve him. And indeed this mercy of creating us such as we are, was not to lead us to Repentance, but was a design of innocence: he intended we should serve him as the Sun and the Moon do, as fire and water do; never to prevaricate the laws he fixed to us, that we might have needed no Repentance. But fince we did degenerate, and being by God made better and more noble creatures than all the inhabitants of the air, the water and the earth befides, we made our felves baser and more ignoble than any: For no Dog, Crocodile, or Swine was ever God's enemy, as we made our felves. Yet then from thence forward God began his work of leading us to Repentance by the riches of his goodness. He caused us to be born of Christian Parents, under whom we were taught the mysteriousness of its goodness and deligns for the redemption of man; and by the delign of which Religion Repentance was taught to mankind, and an excellent Law given for distinction of good and evil. And this is a blessing which though possibly we do not often put into our eucharistical Litanies to give God thanks for; yet if we fadly confider what had become of us, if we had been born under the dominion of a Turkifb Lord, or in America, where no Christians do inhabit, where they worship the Devil, where Witches are their Priests, their Prophets, their Physicians, and their Oracles; can we chuse but apprehend a visible notorious necessity of perishing in those sins, which we then should not have understood by the glass of a Divine Law to have declined, nor by a Revelation have been taught to repent of? But fince the best of men does, in the midst of all the great advantages of Laws, and Examples, and Promises, and Threat-nings, do many things he ought to be ashamed of, and needs to repent of; we can understand the riches of the divine goodness best, by considering that the very defign of our birth and education in the Christian Religion is, that we may recover of and cure our follies by the antidote of Repentance, which is preached to us as a doctrine, and propounded as a favour; which was put into a Law, and purchased for us by a great expence; which God does not more command to us as a duty, than he gives us as a bleffing. For now that we shall not perish for our first fol-lies, but be admitted to new conditions, to be repaired by second thoughts, to have our infirmities excused, and our sins forgive 1, our habits lessened, and our malice cured, after we were wounded, and sick,

and dead, and buried, and in the possession of the Devil; this was such SERM. a bleffing, fo great riches of the Divine goodness, that as it was taught to no Religion but the Christian, revealed by no Law-giver but Christ, fo it was a favour greater than ever God gave to the Angels and Devils: For although God was rich in the effusion of his goodness towards them, yet they were not admitted to the condition of second thoughts; Christ never shed one drop of bloud for them, bis goodness did not lead them to Repentance: but to us it was, that he made this larges of his goodness; to us, to whom he made himself a Brother, and sucked the paps of our Mother; he payed the scores of our fin, and shame, and death, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this Repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of Felicity and Salvation. And if we would consider this fadly, it might make us better to understand our madness and folly in refuling to repent; that is, to be forrowful, and to leave all our fins, and to make amends by a holy life. For that we might be admitted and fuffered to do so, God was fain to pour forth all the riches of his goodness: It cost our dearest Lord the price of his dearest bloud, many a thousand groans, millions of prayers and sighs, and at this instant he is praying for our Repentance; nay he hath prayed for our Repentance these 1600 years incessantly, night and day, and shall do so till dooms-day, [He sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us.] And that we may know what he prays for, he hath sent us Embassadors to declare the purpose of all his design; for S. Paul faith, [We are Embassadours for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God] The purpose of our Embassie and Ministry is a profecution of the mercies of God, and the work of Redemption, and the intercession and mediation of Christ: it is the work of Atonement and Reconciliation that God deligned, and Christ died for and still prays for, and we preach for, and you all must labour for.

And therefore here consider if it be not infinite impiety to despise the riches of such a goodness which at so great a charge, with such infinite labour and deep mysterious arts, invites us to Repentance; that is, to such a thing as could not be granted to us unless Christ should die to purchase it; such a glorious favour, that is the issue of Christ's prayers in Heaven, and of all his labours, his forrows and his fufferings on earth. If we refuse to repent now, we do not so much refuse to do our own duty, as to accept of a reward. It is the greatest and the dearest blessing that ever God gave to men, that they may repent: and therefore to deny it or delay it, is to refuse health, brought us by the skill and industry of the Physician; it is to refuse liberty industry to the physician; it is to refuse liberty industry to the physician. us by our gracious Lord. And certainly we had reason to take it very ill, if at a great expence we should purchase a pardon for a servant, and he out of a peevish pride or negligence shall refuse it; the scorn pays it felf, the folly is its own scourge and sits down in an inglorious

ruine.

After the enumeration of these glories, these prodigies of mercies and loving-kindnesses, of Christ's dying for us, and interceding for us, and merely that we may repent and be faved; I shall less need to instance those other particularities whereby God continues, as by so many arguments of kindness, to sweeten our natures, and make them malleable to the precepts of Love and Obedience, the twin-daughters of holy Repentance : but the poorest person amongst us, besides the blessing and graces already reckoned, hath enough about him, and the accidents of every day, to shame him into Repentance. Does not God fend his Angels to keep thee in all thy ways?

are not they ministring spirits sent forth to wait upon thee as thy guard? art not thou kept from drowning, from fracture of bones, from mad- SER M. ness, from deformities, by the riches of the divine goodness? Tell the joynts of thy body, doest thou want a singer? and if thou dost not understand how great a blessing that is, do but remember how ill thou canst spare the use of it when thou hast but a thorn in it. The very privative bleffings, the bleffings of immunity, fafeguard, and integrity, which we all enjoy, deserve a thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a Cancer upon thy face, or a Wolf into thy breast, if he should spread a crust of Leprose upon thy skin, what wouldest thou give to be but as now thou art? Wouldest not thou repent of thy fins upon that condition? Which is the greater bleffing? To be kept from them, or to be cured of them? And why therefore shall not this greater bleffing lead the to Repentance? Why do we, not so aptly, promise Repentance when we are sick, upon the condition to be made well, and yet perpetually forget it when we are well? As if Health never were a bleffing but when we have it not. Rather I fear the reason is, when we are sick we promise to repent, because then we cannot fin the fins of our former life; but in health our appetites return to their capacity, and in all the way we despite the would be full of horrour and amazement if they should happen to us.

Hath God made any of you all chap-fallen? Are you affrighted with spectres and illusions of the spirits of darkness? How many earthquakes have you bin in? How many days have any of you wanted bread? How many nights have you been without fleep? Are any of you distracted of your senses? And if God gives you meet and drink, health and skeep, proper Seasons of the year, entire senses and an useful understanding; what a great unworthiness is it to be unthankful to so good a God, so benign a Father, so gracious a Lord? All the evils and baseness of the world can shew nothing baser and more unworthy than Ingratitude : and therefore it was not unreasonably said of Aristotle, έντυχία φιλόθε [, Prosperity makes a man love God, supposing men to have so much humanity lest in them, as to love him from whom they have received fo many favours. And Hippocrates faid, that although poor men use to murmur against God, yet rich men will be offering facrifice to their Deity whose beneficiaries they are Now fince the riches of the Divine goodness are so poured out upon the meanest of us all, if we shall refuse to repent, (which is a condition so reasonable that God requires it only for our sake, and that it may end in our Felicity) we do our selves despite, to be unthankful to God; that is, we become miserable, by making our selves basely criminal. man, with whom God hath used to no other method but of his sweetness and the effusion of mercies, brings no other fruits but the apples of Sea in return of all his culture and labours; God will cut off that unprofitable branch, that with sodom it may fuffer the flames of everlasting burning.

> Old on Tes Davortas, & Nixingale, Τρυφης άπκους μεταλαβόντας ο βίος, Πεφυγέναι το βείον .

If here we have good things, and a continual shower of blessings to soften our stony hearts, and we shall remain obdurate against those Sermons of mercy which God makes us every day, there will come a time when this shall be upbraided to us, that we had not var out tround, a thankful mind, but made God to fow his feed upon the fand or upon the stones,

without increase or restitution. It was a sad alarm which God sent to Da-SERM. vid by Nathan, to upbraid his Ingratitude: I anointed thee King over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy Masters house and vives into thy bosom, and the house of Israel and Judahand if this had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things: wherefore hast thou despised the name of the Lord? But how infinitely more can God say to all of us than all this came to ; He hath anointed us Kings and Priefts in the royal Priesthood of Christianity; he hath given us his Holy Spirit to be our guide, his Angels to be our protectors, his creatures for our food and raiment; he hath delivered us from the hands of Satan, hath conquered Death for us, hath taken the sting out, and made it harmless and medicinal, and proclaimed us Heirs of Heaven, Coheirs with the eternal Jefus: and if after all this we despise the Commandment of the Lord, and defer and neglect our Repentance, what shame is great enough, what miferies are sharp enough, what Hell painful enough for such horrid Ingratitude? S. Lewes the King having sent Ivo Bishop of Chartres on an Embaffy, the Bilhop met a woman on the way, grave, fad, phantaltick and melancholick, with fire in one hand, and water in the other. He asked what those symbols meant. She answered, My purpose is with fire to burn Paradife, and with my water to quench the flames of Hell, that men may ferve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God. But this woman began at the wrong end: The love of God is not produced in us, after we have contracted evil habits, till God with his fan in his hand hath throughly purged his floor, till he hath cast out all the devils, and swept the house with the instruments of hope and fear, and with the atchievements and efficacy of Mercies and Judgments. But then fince God may truly fay to us, as of old to his rebellious people, Am I a dry tree to the house of Israel? that is, do I bring them no fruit? do they ferve me for nought? and he expects not our duty till first we feel his goodness; we are now infinitly inexcusable to throw away so great riches, to despise such a goodness.

> However, that we may see the greatness of this treasure of goodness, God seldom leaves us thus: for he sees, (be it spoken to the shame of our natures, and the dishonour of our manners) he sees that his Mercies do not allure us, do not make us thankful, but (as the Roman said,) Felicitate corrumpimur, We become worse for God's Mercy, and think it will be always holiday; and are like the Crystal of Arabia, hardned not by cold, but made crusty and stubborn by the warmth of the divine fire, by its refreshments and mercies: Therefore, to demonstrate that God is good indeed, he continues his Mercies still to us, but in another in-stance; he is merciful to us in punishing us, that we may be led to Re-pentance by such instruments which will scare us from sin; he delivers us up to the pædagogie of the Divine Judgments and there begins the second part of God's Method, intimated in the word anoxi, or Forbearance. God begins his cure by Causticks, by Incisions and instruments of vexation, to try if the Disease that will not yield to the allectives of Cordials and Perfumes, Frictions and Baths, may be forced out by Deletories, Sca-

rifications, and more falutary, but least pleasing Physick.

2. 'ANOXN, Forbearance, it is called in the Text; which signifies Laxamentum or Inducias: that is, when the Decrees of the Divine Judgements temporal are gone out, either wholly to suspend the Execution of them, which is inducia, or a reprieve; or else, when God hath struck once or twice, he takes off his hand, that is laxamentum, an ease or remission of his Judgment. In both these, although in judgment God remembers

members mercy, yet we are under discipline, we are brought into the penitential chamber; at least we are shewed the Rod of God: and if, like Moses's SERM. Rod, it turns us into Serpents, and that we repent not, but grow more Devils; yet then it turns into a Rod again, and finishes up the smiting, or the first designed Affliction.

But I consider it first in general. The riches of the Divine goodness is manifest in beginning this new Method of curing us, by severity and by a rod. And that you may not wonder that I expound this Forbearance to be an act of Mercy punishing, I observe, that besides that the word supposes the Method changed, and it is a Mercy about Judgments, and their manner of execution; it is also in the nature of the thing, in the conjunction of circumstances and the designs of God, a Mercy when he threatens us or strikes us into Repentance

We think that the way of bleffings and prosperous accidents is the finer way of securing our duty; and that when our heads are anointed, our cups crowned, and our tables full, the very careffes of our spirits will best of all dance before the Ark, and sing perpetual Anthems to the honour of our Benefactor and Patron, God: and we are apt to dream that God will make his Saints reign here as Kings in a Millenary Kingdom, and give them the riches and fortunes of this world, that they may rule over men, and fing Pfalms to God for ever. But I remember what Xenophanes fays of God,

* έτε δέμας θνητοίσιν όμιοίι Φ, έτε νόημα.

God is like to men neither in shape nor in counsel; he knows that his mercies confirm some, and encourage more, but they convert but few; alone they lead men to dissolution of manners, and forgetfulness of God, rather than Repentance: not but that Mercies are competent and apt instruments of grace, if we would; but because we are more dispersed in our spirits, and by a prosperous accident are melted into joy and garishness, and drawn off from the sobriety of recollection. Jesburun waxed fat and kicked. Many are not able to suffer and endure Prosperity; it is like the light of the Sun to a weak eye; glorious indeed in it self, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Adam himself (as the Rabbins say) did not dwell one night in Paradise, but was poisoned with Prosperity, with the beauty of his sair Wife and a beauteous Tree: And Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, the other to the old world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering; but as soon as the one of them had escaped from drowning, and the other from burning, and were put into fecurity, they fell into crimes which have dishonoured their memories for above thirty generations together, the crimes of Drunkenness and Incest. Wealth and a full fortune make men licentiously vicious, tempting a man with power to act all that he can defire or defign vicioufly.

> Inde iræfaciles-Namque ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto Intulit, & rebus mores cessere secundis, -Cultus gestare decoros Vix nuribus rapuere mares ; totoque accersitur orbe Quo gens queque perit. Lucan, lib. 1.

And let me observe to you, That though there are in the New Testament many promises and provisions made for the poor in that very capaciSERM.
XII.

tie, they having a title to some certain circumstances and additionals of grace and blessing; yet to rich men our Blessed Saviour was pleased to make none at all, but to leave them involved in general comprehensions, and to have a title to the special promises only, by becoming poor in spirit, and in preparation of mind, though not in fortune and possession. However, it is hard for God to perswade us to this, till we are taught it by a sad experience, That those Prosperities which we think will make us serve God chearfully, make us to serve the world and secular ends dili-

gently, and God not at all.

Repentance is a duty that best complies with Affliction; it is a symbolical estate, of the same complexion and constitution; half the work of Repentance is done by a fad accident, our spirits are made sad, our gayeties mortified, our wildness corrected, the water-springs are ready to run over: but if God should grant our desires, and give to most men Prosperity, with a design to lead them to Repentance, all his pomp and all his employment, and all his affections and passions, and all his circumstances are so many degrees of distance from the conditions and nature of Repentance. It was reported by Dio concerning Nero's mother, that the often withed that her Son might be Emperour, and withed it with so great passion, that upon that condition she cared not though her Son might kill her. Her first wish and her second fear were both granted: But when the began to fear that her Son did really delign to murther her, the used all the art and instruments of diversion that a witty and a powerful, a timorous person and a woman, could invent or apply. Just so it is with us: so we might have our wishes of Prosperity, we promise to undergo all the severities of Repentance; but when we are landed upon our defire, then every degree of satisfaction of those sensualities is a temptation against Repentance; for a man must have his affections weaned from those possessions, before he can be reconciled to the possibilities of Repentance.

And because God knows this well, and loves us better than we do our felves, therefore he fends upon us the Scrolls of vengeance, the hand-writing upon the wall, to denounce Judgement against us: For God is so highly resolved to bring us to Repentance some way or other, that if by his Goodness he cannot shame us into it, he will try if by his Judgments he can scare us into it: not that he strikes always as soon as he hath sent his warrants out; ελέ τοις άμαρτάνεσιν δίθυς ἐπέξεισιν ο Οεός άλλα δίδωσι χέβνον ε'ς μείανοιαν, η την το οφειλήμαι & iasiv, faid Philo. Thus God fent Jonas and denounced Judgments against Nineveh; but with the avoxi, with the forbearance of forty days for the time of their escape, if they would When Noah, the great Preacher of Righteousness, denounced the Floud to all the World, it was with the 'ANOXN, with the forbearance of a hundred and twenty years. And when the great extermination of the Jewish Nation, and their total deletion from being God's people, was foretold by Christ, and decreed by God; yet they had the Avoxy of forty years, in which they were perpetually called to Repentance. These

were reprieves and deferrings of the stroke.

But sometimes God strikes once, and then forbears. And such are all those sadnesses which are less than death: every sickness, every loss, every disgrace, the death of friends and nearest relatives, sudden discontents; these are all of them the louder Calls of God to Repentance; but still, instances of Forbearance.

Indeed many times this Forbearance makes men impudent. It was to in the case of Pharaoh; when God smote him, and then forbore, Pha-

raoh's

rach's heart grew callous and infentible, till God struck again : and this was the meaning of these words of God, I will harden the heart of Pharaob, SER M. that is, I will forbear him; finite him, and then take the blow off: Sic enim Deus induravit Pharaonis cor, said S. Basil. For as water taken off from fire will sooner congeal and become icy, than if it had not been attenuated by the heat : so is the Heart of some men; when smitten by God, it feems soft and pliable, but taken off from the fire of Affliction, it pre-fently becomes horrid, then stiff, and then hard as a rock of Adamant, or as the gates of death and hell. But this is besides the purpose and in-tention of the Divine mercy; this is an adverseisans, a plain contradiction to the riches of God's goodness; this is to be evil because God is good; to burn with flames, because we are cool'd with water; this is to put out the lamps of Heaven, or (if we cannot do it) to put our own eyes out, lest we should behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and be enamoured of his goodness, and repent, and live. O take heed of despising this goodness ; for this is one of God's latest arts to save us; he hath no way left beyond this, but to punish us with a lasting Judgment and a poinant Affliction. In the Tomb of Terentia certain Lamps burned under ground many Ages together; but as soon as ever they were brought into the air, and saw a bigger light, they went out, never to be re-enkindled. So long as we are in the retirements of forrow, of want, of fear, of fickness, or of any fad accident, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God comes with his Avoxi, with his Forbearance, and lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries usabroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness; and we cannot be preserved in heat and light, but by still dwelling in the regions of forrow. And if such be our weaknesses or our folly, it concerns us to pray against such deliverances, to be afraid of health, to beg of God to continue a persecution, and not to deny us the mercy of an Affliction.

And do not we find all this to be a great truth in our felves? Are we fo great strangers to our own weakness and unworthiness, as not to remember when God scared us with Judgments in the neighborhood, where we lived in a great Plague, or if we were ever in a storm, or God had sent a sickness upon us? Then we may please to remember that Repentance was our business, that we designed mountains of Piety, renewed our holy purposes, made vows and solemn facraments to God to become penitent and obedient persons: and we may also remember, without much considering, that as foon as God began to forbear us, we would no longer forbear to fin, but add flame to flame, a heap of fins to a treasure of wrath already too big; being like Pharaoh or Herod, or like the Oxe and Mule, more hardy and callous for our stripes; and melted in the fire, and frozen harder in the cold; worse for all our Afflictions, and the worse for all Gods Judgments; not bettered by his goodness, nor mollified by his threatnings: and what is there more left for God to do unto us? He that is not won by the sense of God's Mercy, can never find any thing in God that shall convert him; and he whom fear and sense of Pain cannot mend, can dever find any argument from bimfelf that shall make him wife. This is fad, that nothing from without, and nothing from within shall move us: nothing in Heaven, and nothing in Hell; neither love, nor fears gratitude to God, nor prefervation of our selves, shall make us to repent. ΘΕΝ 3 πληγήν αχ τως mid a peolos, that shall be his final sentence: He shall never escape that ruine from which the greatest art of God could not intice, nor his terror scare him : He loved cursing, therefore shall it happen to him; he loved not bleffing, therefore shall it be far from him.

Let

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Let therefore every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the Sermons that God hath made us: befides that fweet language of his mercy, and his still voice from Heaven, consider what voices of Thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the still voice again. What dangers have any of you escaped? were you ever affaulted by the rudeness of an ill-natur'd man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of you ever scape drowning, and in a great danger faw the Forbearance of God? Have you never been fick (as you feared) unto death? Or, suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatned you all, and forborn to smite you? or smitten you and forborn to kill you? That is evident. But if you had been a Privado, and of the Cabinet Council with your Angel-Guardian, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had fent out his Warrants to the exterminating Angel, and our Bleffed Saviour by his intercession hath obtained a Reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoycing at thy Conversion and Repentance; if you had known from him the fecrets of that Providence which governs us in fectet, and how many thousand times the Devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministring spirit of God's goodness and forbearance, did interpose and abate, or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head: it must need cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly, that neither will give God thanks, nor fecure thy own well-being.

Hadft thou never any dangerous Fall in thy Intemperance? Then God shewed thee thy danger, and that he was angry at thy sin; but yet did fo pity thy person, that he would forbear thee a little longer, else that Fall had been into thy grave. When thy gluttony gave thee a Surfeit, and God gave thee a remedy, his meaning then was, that thy Gluttony rather should be cured than thy Surfeit; that Repentance should have been thy remedy, and Abstinence and Fasting should be thy cure: Did ever thy proud and revengeful spirit engage thee upon a Duel, or vexatious Law-suit, and God brought thee off with life or peace? His purpose then was, that his Mercy should teach thee Charity. And he that cannot read the purposes of God written with the finger of Judgment, (for as yet his whole hand is not laid on) either is configned to eternal ruine, because God will no more endeavour his cure; or if his Mercy still continues and goes on in long-suffering, it shall be by such vexatious instruments, such Causticks, and Corrosives, such tormenting and desperate medicaments, such which in the very cure will soundly punish thy folly and ingratitude. For deceive not your selves, God's Mercy cannot be made a Patron for any man's impiety; the purpose of it is to bring us to Repentance: and God will do it by the mercies of his Mercies, of by mercies of his Judgments; he will either break our hearts into a thoufand fragments of Contrition, or break our bones in the ruines of the Grave and Hell. And fince God rejoyces in his Mercy above all his works, he will be most impatient that we shall despife that in which he most delights, and in which we have the greatest reason to delight; the riches of that goodness which is essential, and part of his glory, and is communicated to us, to bring us to Repentance, that we may partake of

that goodness, and behold that Glory.

SERMON XIII.

PART II.

Ακροθυμία, Long-suffering. In this one word are contained all the treasures of the Divine Goodness: Here is the length and extension of his Mercy : Pertrahit Spiritum Super nos Dominus, so the Syrian Interpreter reads, Luke 18.7. God holds his breath : He retains his anger within him, left it should come forth and blast us. And here is also much of the Divine Justice : For although God suffers long, yet he does not let us alone; he forbears to destroy us, but not to punish us: and in both, he by many accidents gives probation of his Power; according to the Prayer of the Wife man, Exers 3 molifac, or molifa divarais παροράς άμαρδημαία ανθράπων είς μετάνοιαν, Thou art merciful towards us all, Wild. 11.24. because thou canst do all things; and thou passest by the sins of men; that they may repent. And that God should support our spirit, and preserve our patience, and nourish our Hope, and correct our Stubbornness, and mortifie our Pride, and bring us to him whether we will or no, by fuch gracious violences and merciful judgements which he uses towards us as his last remedies, is not only the demonstration of a mighty Mercy, but of an Almighty Power. So hard a thing it is to make us leave our follies and become wise, that, were not the Mercies of God an effective pitie, and cloathed in all the way of its progress with mightiness and power, every sinner should perish irrevocably. But this is the fiery trial, the last purgatory fire which God uses to burn the thistles, and purifie the dross. When the gentle influence of a Sun-beam will not wither them, nor the weeding-hook of a short Affliction cut them out; then God comes with fire to burn us, with the axe laid to the root of the tree. But then observe, that when we are under this state of Cure, we are so near destruction, that the same instrument that God uses for remedie to us, is also prepared to destroy us; the fire is as apt to burn us to ashes, as to cleanse us when we are so over-grown; and the axe is instrumental to cut us down for fewel, as to square us for building in God's Temple: and therefore when it comes thus far, it will be hard discerning what the purpose of the axe is; and, whether the fire means to burn, we shall know it by the change wrought upon our felves. For what Plato faid concerning his Dream of Purgatory is true here: Quicunque non purgatus migrat ad inferos, jaccbit in luto ; quicunque vero mitratus illuc accesserit, habitabit cum Deis. He that dies in his impuritie, shall lie init for ever; but be that descends to his grave purged and mitred, that is, having quitted his vices, & superinduens justitiam, being cloathed with right consiness, shall dwell in light and immortality. It is fad that we put God to fuch extremities: And as it happens in long diseases, those which Physicians use for the last remedies seldom prevail; and when Consumptive persons come to have their heads shaven, they do not often escape: so it is when we put God to his last remedies. God indeed hath the glory of his patience and his long-suffering, but we feldom have the benefit and the use of it. For if when our fin was young,

and our strength more active, and our habits less, and Vertue not so much SERM. a stranger to us, we suffered sin to prevail upon us, to grow stronger than the ruines of our spirit, and to lessen us into the state of sickness and disability, in the midst of all those remedies which God used to our beginning diseases: much more desperate is our recovery, when our disease is stronger, and our faculties weaker; when our fins reign in us, and our

thoughts of Vertue are not alive.

However, although I say this, and it is highly considerable to the purpose that we never suffer things to come to this extremity, yet if it be upon us, we must do as well as we can: But then we are to look upon it as a design of God's last mercy, beyond which if we protract our Repentance, our condition is desperately miserable. The whole state of which Mercy we understand by the Parable of the Kings reckoning with his servants that were in arrears to him : One was brought to him which owed him ten thousand talents : but for asmuch as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be fold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The man you fee was under the arrest; the sentence was passed upon him, he was a condemned man: but, before the execution of it, he fell down and worthipped, and faid Kuge Mangoon, Lord, Suffer me longer a while; Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. This tells its meaning: this is a Long-sufferance, by being a forbearance only of execution of the last sentence, a putting off Damnation upon a longer trial of our emendation; but in the mean time it implies no other case, but that together with his long-sufferance God may use all other severities and scourges to break our untamed spirits, and to soften them with hammers; so death be put off, no matter else what hardship and loads of sufferance we have. Hic ure, bie seca, ut in eternum parcas; so Saint Austin prayed: Here, O Lord, cut me, bere burn me; spare me not now, that thou mayest spare me for ever. And it is just like the mercy used to a madman, when he is kept in a dark room and tamed with whips; it is a cruel mercy, but fuch as his condition requires; he can receive no other mercy, all things elle were cruelly unmerciful.

I remember what Bion observed wittily of the punishment inflicted upon the daughters of Danam, whom the old Poets feigned to be condemned in Hell to fill a bottomless Tub with water, and, to increase the pain (as they fanlied) this water they were to carry in Sieves, and never to leave work till the Tub were full; It is well (fays he) fince their labour must be eternal, that it is so gentle; for it were more pains to carry their water in whole vessels, and a sad burthen to go loaden to a leaking Tub with unfruitful labours. Just so is the condition of those persons upon whom a wrath is gone out: it is a sad sentence, but acted with a gentle instrument; and since they are condemned to pay the scores of their sins with the sufferance of a load of Judgments, it is well they are such as will run quite through them, and not stick upon them to eternity. Omnes enim pænæ non exterminantes, funt medicinales; All punishments whatfoever which do not destroy us, are intended to save us; they are Lancets which make a wound, but to let forth the Venome of our Ulcers. When God flew twenty three thousand of the Assyrians for their Fornication, that was a Final Justice upon their persons, and consigned them to a sad Eternity: for beyond such an infliction there was no remedy. But when God sent Lions to the Assyrian inhabitants of Samaria, and the Judgment drave them to inquire after the manner of the God of the land, and they sent for Priests from Jerusalem to teach them how to worlhip the God of Israel; that was a Mercy and a Judgment

too:

tho: the long forbearance of God, who destroyed not all the inhabitants, led the rest unto Repentance.

SERM. XIII.

to this pass, that God is forced to the last remedies of Judgments, this Long-sufferance will little or nothing concern particular perfons, but nations and communities of men: For those who are smitten with Judgment, if God takes his hand off again, and so opens a way for their Repentance by prolonging their time; that comes under the second part of God's Method, the Avexis of Forbeanances but if he smites a single person with a final Judgement, that is a Long-suffering, not of him, but towards others; and God hath destroyed my neighbour, to make me repent, my neighbours time being expired, and the date of his possibility determined. For a man's Death-bed is but an ill station for a Penitent; and a final Judgement is no good Monitor to him, to whom it is a severe Executioner. They that perished in the gain saying of Gorah were out of the conditions of repentance. I But the people that were affrighted with the neighbourhood of the Judgment, and the Expresses God's anger manifested in such visible remonstrances, they were the men called unto repentance. But concerning the whole Nations or Communities of men this Long-sufferance is a Sermon of Repentance, loud, clamorous, and highly argumentative. When God fuffered the mutinies, the affronts, the balenels and ingratitude, the follies and relapses of the children of Ifrael, who murmured against God ten times in the wilderness; God fent evil Angels among them, and fiery Serpents, and Pestilence, and Fire from Heaven, and Prodigies from the earth, and a prevailing Sword of the enemies: and in all these accidents, although some innocent persons felt the contingencies and variety of mortality, yet those wicked persons who fell by the design of God's anger were made examples unto others, and instances of God's Forbearance to the Nation; and yet this Forbearance was fuch, that although God preserved the Nation in being, and in title to the first promises, yet all the particular persons that came from Egypt died in the wilderness, two only excepted.

2. And I desire you to observe this, that you may truly estimate the arts of the Divine Justice and Mercy. For all the world being one continual and entire argument of the Divine Mercy, we are apt to abuse that mercy to vain confidences and presumption; first mistaking the End, as if God's Mercy would be indulgent to our fin, to which it is the greatest enemy in the world : for it is a certain truth, That the Mercy of God is as great an enemy to fin as his Justice is ; and as God's Juflice is made the hand-maid of his Mercy to cure fin, fo it is the fervant also and the instrument to avenge our despight and contempt of Mercy; and in all the way, where a difference can be, there Justice is the less principal. And it were a great fign of folly and a huge mistake, to think our Lord and our friends do us offices of kindness, to make themselves more capable of affronts; and that our fathers care over us and provisions for us can tempt us to disobey them: The very purpose of all those emanations is, that their love may return in duty, and their providence be the parent of our prudence, and their care be crowned with our piety; and then we shall all be crowned, and shall return like the Year, that ends into its own circle; and the fathers and the children, the benefactors and the beneficiary shall knit the wreath, and bind each other in the eternal inclosures and circlings of immortality. *But besides, as the men who presume to sin because of God's Mercy do mistake the very

SERM.

End and design of God's mercy, so they also mistake the Occonomy of it, and the manner of its ministration.

3. For if God fuffers men to go on in fins, and punishes them not, it is not a mercy, it is not a Forbearance; it is a Hardening them, a con-I figning them to ruine and reprobation : and themselves give the best argument to prove it ; for they continue in their fin, they multiply their iniquity, and every day grow more enemy to God; and that is no mercy that increases their hostility and enmity with God. A prosperous iniquity is the most unprosperous condition in the whole world. When he sew them, they sought him, and turned them early, and enquired after God: but as long as they prevailed upon their enemies, they forgat that God was their ftrength, and the high God was their redeemer. It was well observed by the Persian Embassador of old; when he was telling the King a sad story of the overthrow of all his Army by the Athenians, he adds this of his own; That the day before the fight, the young Persian Gallants, being confident they should destroy their enemies, were drinking drunk, and railing at the timorousness and sears of Religion, and against all their Gods, faying, there were no such things, and that all things came by Chance and industry, nothing by the providence of the supreme power. But the next day, when they had fought unprosperoully, and, flying from their enemies, who were eager in their pursuit, they came to the River Strymon, which was so frozen that their boats could not lanch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the ice would not bear them; then you should see the bold Gallants, that the day before said there was no God, most timorously and superstitionsly fall upon their faces, and beg of God, that the River Strymon might bear them over from their enemies. What wisdom, and Philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and bleffings cannot do, a mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of bold Lust and imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowness of a Child, our Revenge into the Charity of Prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore God hath taken a course proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm Lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a Cockatrice. And therefore observe how it is that God's Mercy prevails over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but his Judgments: For as when a Famine had been in Ifrael in the days of Ahab for three years and a half, when the angry Prophet Elijah met the King, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the Heavens was black and all tempelt, yet then the Prophet was most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the Heavens were more beautiful than when the Sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the East: So it is in the Oeconomy of the Divine Mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with Cypress and Yew, and the mourners go about the streets, this is nothing but the pompa misericordia, this is the funeral of our fins, dreffed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with fad accents of death; but the light is refreshing, as the beauties of the field which God had bleffed, and the sounds are healthful, as the noise of a Physician.

Pfal.75.8.

This is that Riddle spoken of in the Pfalm, Calix in manu Domini vini meri, plenus misto; the pure impure, the mingled unmingled cup: for it is a cup in which God hath poured much of his severity and anger, and yet it is pure and unmingled; for it is all Mercy. And so the Riddle is resolved,

and

and our cup is full and made more wholsome; Lymphatum crescit, dulces.

cit, ladere nescit: it is some Justice, and yet it is all Mercy; the very Justice of God being an act of Mercy; a forbearance of the man or the Nation, and the punishing the sin. Thus it was in the case of the Children XIII. of Ifrael; when they ran after the bleating of the Idolatrous Calves, Mojes prayed passionately, and God heard his prayer, and forgave their sin unto them. And this was David's observation of the manner of God's mercy to them; Thou wast a God and forgavest them, though thou tookest venge- Pfal. 99.8. ance of their inventions. For God's Mercy is given to us by parts, and to certain purposes. Sometimes God only so forgives us, that he does not cut us off in the fin, but yet lays on a heavy load of Judgements: So he did to his people, when he fent them to school under the discipline of seventy years Captivity. Sometimes he makes a Judgement less, and forgives in respect of the degree of the infliction, he strikes more gently; and whereas God had defigned, it may be, the death of thy felf or thy nearest relative, he is content to take the life of a child. And so he did to David, when he forbore him; The Lord hath taken away thy fin, thou shalt 2 Sam. 12.13, not die; nevertheless the child that is born unto thee, that shall die. Some-14-times he puts the evil off to a farther day; as he did in the case of Abab and Hezekiah: to the first he brought the evil upon his House, and to the fecond he brought the evil upon his Kingdom in his fon's days, God forgiving only so as to respite the evil, that they should have peace in their And thus when we have committed a fin against God which own days. hath highly provoked him to anger, even upon our Repentance we are not fure to be forgiven, so as we understand forgiveness; that is, to hear no more of it, never to be called to an account: but we are happy if God fo forgive us, as not to throw us into the insufferable flames of Hell, though he smite us till we groan for our misery, till we chatter like a smallow, (as David's expression is.) And though David was an excellent Penitent; yet after he had lost the child begotten of Bathsheba, and God had told him he had forgiven him, yet he raised up his darling Son against him, and forced him to an inglorious flight, and his Son lay with his Father's Concubines in the face of all Israel. So that when we are forgiven, yet it is ten to one but God will make us to smart and roar for our fins, for the very disquietness of our souls.

For if we fin, and ask God forgiveness, and then are quiet, we feel so little inconvenience in the trade, that we may more easily be tempted to make a trade of it indeed. I with to God that for every fin we have committed, we could heartily cry God mercy and leave it, and judge our felves for it, to prevent God's anger: but when we have done all that we commonly call Repentance, and when possibly God hath forgiven us to some purposes, yet it may be he punishes our sin when we least think of it; that fin which we have long fince forgotten. It may be for the Lust of thy youth thou hast a healthless old age. An old Religious person long ago complained it was his case.

> Quos nimis effrænes habui, nunc vapulo renes: Sic luitur juvenis culpa, dolore senis.

It may be thy fore eyes are the punishment of Intemperance seven years ago; or God cuts thy days shorter, and thou shalt die in a florid age; or he raises up afflictions to thee in thine own house, in thine own bowels; or hath fent a gangrene into thy estate; or with any arrow out of his quiver he can wound thee, and the arrow shall stick fast in thy slesh, although God hath forgiven thy fin to many purposes. Our Bleffed Savi-

our was heard in all that he prayed (faid the Apostle:) and he prayed for the fews that crucified him, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: and God did forgive that great fin, but how far? Whereas it was just in God to deprive them of all possibility of receiving benefit from the death of Christ, yet God admitted them to it; he gave them time, and possibilities, and helps, and great advantages to bring them to Repentance; he did not presently shut them up in his final and eternal anger; and yet he had finally refoled to destroy their City and Nation, and did so, but forbore them forty years, and gave them all the helps of Miracles and Sermons Apoltolical to shame them, and force them into sorrow for their fault. And before any man can repent, God hath forgiven the man in one degree of Forgiveness; for he hath given him grace of Repentance, and taken from him that final anger of the spirit of Reprobation: and when a man hath repented, no man can fay that God hath forgiven him to all purposes, but hath reserves of anger to punish the sin, to make the man afraid to fin any more; and to represent, That when any man hat finned, whatever he does afterwards, he shall be miserable as long as he lives, vexed with its adherences and its neighbourhood and evil confequence. For as no man that hath finned can during his life ever return to an integral and perfect innocence: so neither shall he be restored to a perfect peace, but must always watch and strive against his fin, and always mourn and pray for its pardon, and always find cause to hate it, by knowing himself to be for ever in danger of enduring some grievous calamity, even for those sins for which he hath truly repented him, for which God hath in many gracious degrees passed his Pardon. This is the manner of dispensation of the Divine Mercy, in respect of particular perfons and Nations too.

But sometimes we find a severer Judgment happening upon a people; and yet in that fad story God's Mercy sings the triumph, which although it be much to God's glory, yet it is a fad ftory to finning people. Six hundred thouland fighting men, belides women and children and decrepit persons, came out of Egypt; and God destroyed them all in the wilderness except Caleb and Joshua: and there it was that God's Mercy prevailed over his Jufrice, that he did not destroy the Nation, but still preserved a succession to Jacob, to possess the Promise. God drowned all the world except eight perjons; his Mercy there also prevailed over his Justice, that he preserved a remnant to mankind; his Justice devoured all the world, and his Mercy, which preserved but eight, had the honour of the prevailing Attribute. God destroyed sodom and the five Cities of the Plain, and rescued but four from the flames of that sad burning, and of the four lost one in the flight;

and yet his Mercy prevailed over his Justice, because he did not destroy all.

And in these sences we are to understand the excellency of the Divine Mercy: even when he smites, when he rebukes us for sin, when he makes our beauty to fail, and our flesh to consume away like a moth fretting a garment, yet then his Mercy is the prevailing ingredient. If his Judgements be but Fines set upon our heads, according to the mercy of our old Laws, Salvo contenemento, so as to preserve our Estates, to continue our hopes and possibilities of Heaven; all the other Judgments can be nothing but Mercies, excellent instruments of Grace, arts to make us sober and wife, to take us off from our vanity, to restrain our wildnesses, which if they were left unbridled would fet all the world on fire. God's Judgments are like the Censures of the Church, in which a sinner is delivered over to Satan to be buffeted; that the spirit may be saved. The result of all this is, That God's Mercies are not, ought not, cannot be instruments of confidence

confidence to fin, because the very purpose of his Mercy is to the contrary, and the very manner of his Occonomy and Dispensation is such, SERM. that God's Mercy goes along in Complexion and conjunction with his Judgements: The riches of his Forbearance is this, That he forbears to throw us into hell, and sends the Mercies of his Rod to chide us unto Repentance, and the Mercies of his Rod to punish us for having sinned, and that when we have finned we may never think our selves secured, nor ever be reconciled to fuch dangers and deadly poisons. This, this is the manner of the Divine Mercy. Go now, fond man, and, because God is merciful, presume to sin, as having grounds to hope that thou mayest fin, and be fafe all the way! If this hope (shall I call it) or fordid flattery could be reasonable, then the Mercies of God would not lead us to Repentance; so unworthy are we in the sense and largeness of a wide fortungand pleasant accident. For impunity was never a good argument to make men to obey Laws. Quotusquisque reperitur, qui impunitate pro-posita abstinere possit injuris ? Impunitas est maxima peccandi illecebra, said Cicero. And therefore the wisdom of God hath so ordered the actions of the world, that the most fruitful showers shall be wrapped up in a cover of black clouds; that health shall be conveyed by bitter and ill-tasted drugs; that the temples of our bodies shall be purged by whips, and that the cords of the whip shall be the cords of love, to draw us from the intanglings of vanity and folly. This is the Long-suffering of God, the last remedy to our diseased Souls: and, αναλωνως οις πολλά παθων ε σωφερνίζεται, faid Phalaris; unless we be sensless, we shall be brought to sober courses by all those sad accidents and wholesome, but ill-tasted, Mercies, which we feel in all the course and succession of the Divine Long-

sufferance. The use of all the premisses is that which Saint Paul expresses in the Text, that we do not despise all this: and he only despises not, who ferves the ends of God in all these designs of Mercy, that is, he that repents him of his fins. But there are a great many despisers; all they that live in their fins, they that have more bleffings than they can reckon hours in their lives, that are courted by the Divine favour and wooed to Salvation, as if mankind were to give, not to receive, so great a bleffing, all they that answer not to so friendly Summons, they are despisers of God's Mercies: and although God overflows with Mercies, and does not often leave us to the only hopes of being cured by Unctions and gentile Cataplasms, but proceeds farther, and gives us Stibium or prepared Steel, sharp arrows of his anger, and the sword, and the hand offickness; yet we are not sure of so much favour as to be entertained longer in God's Hospital, but may be thrust forth among the Incurabiles. Plutarch reports concerning Swine, that their optick nerves are so disposed to turn their eyes downward, that they cannot look upwards, nor behold the face of Heaven, unless they be thrown upon their backs. Such Swine are we: we seldom can look up to Heaven, till God by his judgements throws us upon our backs; till he humbles us and foftens us with showrs of our own blood, and tears of forrow: and yet God hath not promifed that he will do so much for us; but for ought we know, as soon as ever

the Devil enters into our swinish and brutish hearts, we shall run down the hill, and perish in the floods and seas of intolerable misery. And therefore, besides that it is a huge folly in us that we will not be cured with pleasant medicines, but must be longing for Coloquintida and for Vomits, for knives and poniards instead of the gentle showrs of the divine refreshments, besides that this is an imprudence and sottishness; we

do infinitely put it to the venture whether we shall be in a saveable con-SERM. dition or no, after the rejection of the first state of Mercies. But however, then begins the first step of the Judgement and pungent misery, we are perishing people, or, if not, yet at the least not to be cured without the abscission of a member, without the cutting off a hand or leg, or the putting out of an eye: we must be cut, to take the stone out of our hearts, and that is a state of a very great infelicity; and if we scape the Stone, we cannot escape the Surgeon's knife; if we escape death, yet we have a fickness; and though that be a great mercy in respect of death, yet it is as great a misery in respect of health. And that is the first punishment for the despite done to the first and most sensible Mercies; we are fallen into a fickness that cannot be cured but by disease and hardship.

But if this despite runs farther, and when the Mercies look on us with an angry countenance, and that God gives us only the mercy of a Punishment, if we despise this too, we increase but our misery as we increase our sin. The summe of which is this; that if Pharaoh will not be cured by one plague he shall have ten; and if ten will not do it, the great and tenth wave, which is far bigger than all the rest, the severest and the last arrow of the quiver, then we shall perish in the Red Sea, the sea of stames and bloud, in which the ungodly shall roul eter-

nally.

But some of these Despisers are such as are unmoved when God smites others; like Gallio, when the Jews took softhenes and beat him in the Pleading-place, he cared for none of these things; he was not concerned in that interest: and many Gallie's there are among us, that understand it not to be a part of the Divine Method of God's Long-Sufferance, to strike others to make us afraid. But however we sleep in the midst of fuch alarms, yet know, that there is not one death in all the neighbourhood but is intended to thee; every crowing of the Cock is to awake thee to Repentance: and if thou fleepest still, the next turn may be thine; God will fend his Angel, as he did to Peter and smite thee on thy side, and wake thee from thy dead sleep of sin and sottishness. But beyond this some are Despisers still, and hope to drown the noises of Mount sinai, the sound of Cannons, of Thunders and Lightnings, with a counter-noise of revelling & clamorous roarings, with merry meetings; like the sacrifices to Moloch, they sound drums and trumpets, that they might not hear the sad shriekings of their children as they were dying in the cavity of the brazen Idol: and when their Conscience shricks out or murmurs in a fad melancholy, or something that is dear to them is smitten, they attempt to drown it in a sea of drink, in the heathenish noises of idle and drunken company; and that which God sends to lead them to Repentance, leads them to a Tavern, not to refresh their needs of nature, or for ends of a tolerable civility, or innocent purposes, but, like the condemned persons among the Levantines, they tasted wine freely, that they might die and be insensible. I could easily reprove such persons with an old Greek Proverb mentioned by Plutarch, Tiel The Ev Suplay, ούτε πιδάγεας απαλλάτια κάλκιος, You shall ill be cured of the knotted Gout if you have nothing else but a wide shooe. But this reproof is too gentle for fo great a madness: it is not only an incompetent cure, to apply the plaister of a sin or vanity to cure the smart of a Divine Judgement; but it is a great increaser of the misery, by swelling the cause to bigger and monstrous proportions. It is just as if an impatient fool, feeling the smart of his medicine, shall tear his wounds open and throw

away the instruments of his cure, because they bring him health at the charge of a little pain. Elyus Kueis Thien's Masiyou, He that is full of fripes DER M. and troubles, and decked round about with thorns, he is near to God : But he that, because he sits uneasily when he sits near the King that was crowned with thorns, shall remove thence, or strew flowers, Roses and Jessamine, the Down of thistles and the softest Gossamere, that he may die without pain, die quietly and like a lamb, fink to the bottom of Hell without noise; this man is a fool, because he accepts death, if it arrest him in civil language, is content to die by the sentence of an eloquent Judge, and preferrs a quiet paffage to Hell before going to Heaven in

That Italian Gentleman was certainly a great lover of his sleep, who was angry with the Lizard that wak'd him when a Viper was creeping into his mouth: When the Devil is entering into us to poison our spirits, and steal our souls away while we are sleeping in the lethargy of fin, God fends his sharp messages to awaken us; and we call that the enemy, and use arts to cure the remedy, not to cure the disease. There are some persons that will never be cured, not because the sickness is incurable, but because they have ill stomachs, and cannot keep the medi-Just so is his case that so despiles God's method of curing him by these instances of Long-sufferance, that he uses all the arts he can to be quit of his Physician, and to spill his Physick, and to take Cordials as foon as his vomit begins to work. There is no more to be faid in this affair, but to read the poor wretch's sentence, and to declare his condition. As at first, when he despised the first great mercies, God sent him sharpness and sad accidents to ensober his spirits: So now that he despises his Mercy also, the Mercy of the tod, God will take it away from him, and then I hope all is well. Miserable man that thou art! this is thy undoing; if God ceases to strike thee because thou wilt not mend, thou art sealed up to ruine and reprobation for ever; the Physician hath given the over, he hath no kindness for thee. This was the desperate estate of Judah, Ah sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity: Esay 1.434. They have for saken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy one of Israel. Why should ye be stricken any more? This is the ανάθημα μαρονάθα; the most bitter curse, the greatest Excommunication, when the delinquent is become a Heathen and a Publican without the Covenant, out of the pale of the Church; the Church hath nothing to do with them: for what have I to do with them that are without? faid Saint Paul: It was not lawful for the Church any more to punish them. And this Court Christian is an imitation and parallel of the Justice of the Court of Heaven: When a finner is not mended by Judgements at long running, God cuts him off from his inheritance, and the lot of fons; he will chaltife him no more, but let him take his course, and spend his portion of prosperity such as shall be allowed him in the great Oeconomy of the World. Thus God did to his Vineyard which he rook such pains to fence, to plant, to manure, to dig, to cut, and to prune: and when after all it brought forth wild grapes, the last and worst of Gods anger was this, Auferam sepem ejus ; God had fenced it with a hedge of thorns, and God Elay s.s. would take away all that hedg, he would not leave a thorn standing, not one Judgement to reprove or admonish them, but all the wild beafts, and wilder and more beaftly Lusts, may come and devour it, and trample it

And now what shall I say, but those words quoted by Saint Paul in his Sermon, Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish? perish in your own Act 13 41. folly

folly by frubbornness and ingratitude. For it is a huge contradiction to SERM. the nature and defigne of God: God calls us, we refule to hears he invites us with fair promites, we hear and confider not; he gives us bleffings, we take them and understand not his maning ; we take out the token, but read not the letter : then he threatens us, and we regard notes he strikes our neighbours, and we are not concerned : then he strikes us gently, but we feel it not: then he does like the Physician in the Greek Epigram, who being to cure a man of a Lethargy, locked him into the fame room with a mad-man, that he by dry-beating him might make him at least fenfible of blows; but this makes us instead of running to God, to trust in unskilful Physicians, or, like Saul, to run to a Pythonisse, we run for cure to a crime, we take fanctuary in a pleafant fin; just as if a man to cure his melancholy faould defire to be flung with a Tarantula, that av least he may die merrily. What is there more to be done that God hathi not yet done? He is forced at last to break off with a Curavimus Babylon nem, & non est fanata, We dreffed and tended Babylon, but The was incurable : there is no help but fuch persons must die in their fins, and lie down in eternal forrow.

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Of Growth in GRACE,

as granned bope at its well. Amendle man that there and that is a

But grow ingrace, and in the knowledge of the Lord fefus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.



Hen Christianity, like the day-spring from the East, with a new light did not only inlighten the world, but amazed the minds of men, and entertained their curiofities, and feized upon their warmer and more pregnant affections; it was no wonder that whole Nations were con-

verted at a fermon, and multitudes were instantly professed; and their understandings followed their affections, and their wills followed their understandings, and they were convinced by miracle, and overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal, and wisely governed by their Guides, and ravished with the fancity of the Doctrine, and the holiness of their Examples. And this was not only their duty, but a great instance of providence, that by the great Religion and piety of the first Professors Christianity might be firmly planted and unshaken by scandal, and hardened by Persecution; and that these first Lights might be actual Precedents for ever, and Copies for us to transcribe in all descending Ages of Christianity, that thither we might run to fetch oil to enkindle our extinguished lamps. But then Piety was so universal, that it might well be enjoyned by Saint Paul, that, if a brother walked disorderly, the Christians should avoid his company: He forbad them not to accompany with the Heathens that walked diforderly; for

for then a man must have gone out of the world; but they were not to endure so much as to eat with, or to salute a disorderly brother, and ill-living Christian. But now, if we should observe this Canon of Saint Paul, and refuse to eat or to converse with a Fornicator, or a Drunkard, or a perjured person, or Covetous, we must also go out of the world: for a pious or a holy person is now as rare as a disorderly Christian was at first; and as Christianity is multiplied every where in name and title, so it is destroyed in life, essence, and proper operation: and we have very great reason to fear, that Christ's Name will serve us to no end but to upbraid our baseness, and his Person only to be our Judge, and his Laws as so many Bills of accusation, and his Graces and helps offered us but as aggravations of our unworthiness, and our Baptism but an occasion of Vowbreach, and the holy Communion but an act of Hypocrifie, formality, or facrilege, and all the Promises of the Gospel but as pleasant Dreams, and the Threatnings but as Arts of affrightment. For Christiany lasted pure and zealous, it kept its Rules, and observed its own Laws for three hundred years, or thereabouts; so long the Church remained a Virgin; for so long they were warmed with their first fires, and kept under discipline by the rod of Persecution: but it hath declined almost fourteen hundred years together; Prosperity and Pride, Wantonness and great Fortunes, Ambition and Interest, false Doctrine upon mistake and upon design, the malice of the Devil and the arts of all his instruments, the want of zeal and a weariness of spirit, filthy examples and a disreputation of Piety and a strict life, seldom precedents and infinite discouragements have caused so infinite a declension of Piety and holy living, that what Papirius Massonius, one of their own, said of the Popes of Rome, In Pontificibus vel minus boni quam cateri mortales esse solent, No man looks for Holiness in the Bishops of Rome; those are the best Popes who are not extremely wicked: the same is too true of the greatest nemo hodie Sanctitatem requirit; optimi putantur sivel leviter mali ly wicked: the same is too true of the greatest part of Christians; Men are excellent persons if they be not Traytors or Adulterous, Oppressors or Injurious, Drunkards or Scandalous, if they be not as this Publican, as the vilest person with whom they converse.

SERM. XIV.

Nunc, si depositum non inficietur amicus, Si reddat veterem cum tota erugine follem; Prodigiosa sides, & Thuscis digna libellis, Quaque coronata lustrari debeat agna. Juven. Sat. 13.

He that is better than the dregs of his own age, whose Religion is something above prophanenes, and whose sobriety is a step or two from down-right in emperance: whose discourse is not swearing, nor yet apt to edifie, whose Charity is set out in piety, and a gentle yerning and saying [God help,] whose Alms are contemptible, and his Devotion infrequent; yet, as things are now, he is unus è millibus, one of a thousand, and he stands eminent and conspicuous in the valleys and lower grounds of the present Piety; for a bank is a mountain upon a level: But what is rare and eminent in the manners of men this day, would have been scandalous, and have deserved the rod of an Apostle, if it had been confronted with the servours and rare Devotion and Religion of our fathers in the Gospel.

Men of old looked upon themselves as they stood by the examples and presidents of Martyrs, and compared their Piety to the life of Saint Paul, and estimated their zeal by slames of the Beauerges, Saint James

and his brother; and the Bishops were thought reprovable as they fell SERM. Short of the ordinary Government of Saint Peter and Saint John; and the Assemblies of Christians were so holy, that every meeting had Religion enough to hallow a house, and convert it to a Church; and every day of Fealting was a Communion, and every Falting-day was a day of Repentance and Alms, and every day of thanksgiving was a day of Joy and Alms; and Religion began all their actions, and Prayer confecrated them, and they ended in Charity, and were not polluted with design: they despiled the World heartily, and pursued after Heaven greedily; they knew no ends but to serve God, and to be saved; and had no designs upon their neighbours, but to lead them to God, and to felicity; till Satan, full of envy to see such excellent days, mingled Covetousness and Ambition within the throngs and Conventions of the Church, and a Vice crept into an Office: And then the mutual confidence grew less, and so Charity was lessened; and Heresies crept in, and then Faith began to be fullied; and Pride crept in, and then men fnatched at Offices, not for the work, but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more than God and the Church: till at last it came to that pass where now it is, that the Clergy live lives no better than the Laity, and the Laity are stooped to imitate the evil customs of strangers and enemies of Christianity: so that we should think Religion in a good condition, if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an ordinary, eaven, and just life, without the scandal and allays of a great impiety. But because such is the nature of things, that either they grow towards perfection, or decline towards dissolution; there is no proper way to secure it but by setting its growth forward: For Religion hath no station, or natural periods; if it does not grow better it grows much worse; not that it always returns the man into scandalous sins, but that it establishes and fixes him in a state of indifferency and lukewarmness; and he is more averse to a state of improvement, and dies in an incurious, ignorant and unrelenting condition.

But grow in grace That's the remedy, and that would make us all wife and happy, bleffed in this world, and fure of Heaven. Concerning which we are to consider, First, What the state of Grace is into which every one of us must be entred, that we may grow in it: Secondly, The proper parts, acts, and offices of grawing in grace: Thirdly, The figns, consequences, and proper significations, by which if we cannot perceive the growing, yet afterwards we may perceive that me are grown, and so judge of the state of our duty, and concerning our final condition of be-

ing faved.

1. Concerning the state of Grace, I consider that no man can be faid to be in the state of Grace who retains an affection to any one sin. The state of pardon and the Divine favour begins at the first instance of anger against our crimes, when we leave our fondnesses and kind opinions, when we excuse them not, and will not endure their shame, when we feel the smarts of any of their evil consequents: for he that is a perfect lover of fin, and is fealed up to a reprobate fense, endures all that fin brings along with it; and is reconciled to all its mischiefs; he can suffer the sickness of his own Drunkenness, and yet call it pleasure; he can wait like a slave to serve his Lust, and yet count it no disparagement; he can suffer the dishonour of being accounted a base and dishonest person, and yet look confidently, and think himself no worse. But when the grace of God begins to work upon a man's spirit, it makes the Conscience nice, and tender; and although the fin as yet does not displease the man, but he can endure

endure the flattering and alluring part, yet he will not endure to be used fo ill by his fin; he will not be abused and dishonoured by it. But be- SER M. cause God hath so allayed the pleasure of his sin, that he that drinks the sweet should also strain the dregs through his throat; by degrees God's grace doth irreconcile the Convert, and discovers, first its base attendants, then its worle consequents, then the displeasure of God; that here commences the first resolutions of leaving the sin, and trying if in the service of God his spirit and the whole appetite of man may be better entertained. He that is thus far entered shall quickly perceive the difference, and meets arguments enough to invite him farther : For then God treats the man as he treated the Spies that went to discover the Land of Promise; he ordered the year in plenty, and directed them to a pleasant and a fruitful place, and prepared bunches of grapes of a miraculous and prodigious greatness, that they might report good things of Canaan, and invite the whole Nation to attempt its conquest: so God's grace represents to the new Converts and the weak ones in Faith, the pleasures and first deliciousnesses of Religion; and when they come to fpie the good things of that way that leads to Heaven, they presently perceive themselves eased of the load of an evil Conscience, of their fears of death, of the confusion of their shame, and God's spirit gives them a cup of sensible comfort, and makes them to rejoyce in their prayers, and weep with pleasures mingled with innocent passion and religious changes. And although God does not deal with all men in the same method, or in manners that can regularly be deferribed, and all men do not feel, or do not observe, or cannot for want of skill discern, such accidental sweetnesses and pleasant grapes at his first enterance into Religion: yet God to every man does minister excellent arguments of invi-tation; and such, that if a man will attend to them, they will certainly move either his affections or his will, his fancy or his reason, and most commonly both. But while the Spirit of God is doing this work in man, man must also be overgyos 78 008, a fellow worker with God 3 he must entertain the Spirit, attend his inspirations, receive his whilpers, obey all his motions, invite him farther, and truly renounce all confederacy with his enemy, Sin; at no hand fuffering any root of bitterness to fpring up, not allowing to himself any reserve of carnal pleasure, no clancular Lust, no private Oppressions, no secret Coveroushels, no love to this world that may discompose his duty. For if a man prays all day, and at night is intemperate; if he spends histime in reading, and his recreation be finful; if he studies Religion, and practises Self-interest; if he leaves his Swearing, and yet retains his Pride; if he becomes chafte, and yet remains preville and imperious: this man is not changed from the flate of fin into the first stage of the state of grace, he does at no hand belong to God; he hath suffered himself to be scared from one fin, and tempted from another by interest, and hath left a third by reason of his inclination, and a fourth for shame, or want of opportunity, but the Spirit of God hath not yet planted one perfect plant there: God may make use of the accidentally-prepared advantages; but as yet the Spirit of God hath not begun the proper and direct work of grace in his heart. But when we leave every fin, when we refolve never to return to the chains, when we have no love for the worldbut fuch as may be a servant of God; then I account that we are entred into a state of Grace, from whence I am now to begin to reckon the commencement of this Precept, Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jefus Christ. has

2. And now the first part of this duty is, to make Religion to be the

o business of our lives; for this is the great instrument which will naturally ERM. produce our growth in Grace, and the perfection of a Christian. For, a man cannot after a state of fin be instantly a Saint; the work of Heaven XIV. is not done by a flash of lightning, or a dash of affectionate rain, or a few tears of a relenting pitie: God and his Church have appointed holy Intervals, and have taken portions of our time for Religion, that we may be called off from the world, and remember the end of our creation, and do honour to God, and think of Heaven with hearty purposes and peremptory deligns to get thither. But, as we must not neglect those times which God hath referved for his Service, or the Church hath prudently decreed; nor yet act Religion upon such days with forms and outsides, or to comply with customs, or to seem religious: so, we must take care that all the other portions of our time be hallowed with little retirements of our thoughts, and short conversations with God, and all along be guided with holy intention; that even our works of nature may pass into the relations of Grace, and the actions of our Calling may help towards the obtaining the prize of our high calling : while our Eatings are actions of Temperance, our Labours are profitable, our Humiliations are acts of Obedience, and our alms of Charity, and our Marriages are chaftes and whether we eat or drink, sleep or wake, we may do all to the glory of God, by a direct intuition or by a reflex act, by design or by supplement, by forelight or by an after-election. And to this purpose we must not look upon Religion as our trouble and our hindrance, nor think Alms chargeable or expensive, nor our Fastings vexatious and burthensom, nor our Prayers a weariness of spirit: But we must make these, and all other the duties of Religion, our employment, our care, the work and end for which we came into the world; and remember that we never do the work of men, nor serve the ends of God, nor are in the proper imployment and bulinels of our life, but when we worthip God, or live like wife or fober persons or do benefit to our brother.

I will not turn this discourse into a Reproof, but leave it represented as a Duty: Remember that God fent you into the world for Religion: we are but to pass through our pleasant fields or our hard labours, but to lodge a little while in our fair Palaces or our meaner Cottages, but to bait in the way at our full Tables or with our spare diet: but then only man does his proper imployment, when he prays, and does Charity, and mortifies his unruly appetites, and restrains his violent Passions, and becomes like to God, and imitates his Holy Son, and writes after the copies of Apostles and Saints. Then he is dressing himself for Eternity, where he must dwell or abide either in an excellent beatifical country, or in a prison of amazement and eternal horror. And after all this, you may, if you please, call to mind how much time you allow to God and to your Souls every day, or every moneth, or in a year if you please; for I feat the account of the time is soon made, but the account for the neglect will be harder. And it will not easily be anfwered that all our days and years are little enough to attend perishing things, and to be swallowed up in avaricious and vain attendances, and we shall not attend to Religion with a zeal so great as is our revenge, or as is the hunger of one meal. Without much time, and a wary life, and a diligent circumspection, we cannot mortiste our sins, or do the first works of Grace. I pray God we be not found to have grown like the linews of old age, from strength to remissines, from thence to dissolution, and infirmity, and death. Menedemus was wont to say, that the young boys that went to Athens, the first year were wife men, the second

year Philosophers, the third Orators, and the fourth were but Plebeians; and understood nothing but their own ignorance. And just so it happens to some in the progresses of Religion: At first they are violent and active, and then they satiate all the appetites of Religion; and that which is left is, that they were soon weary, and sate down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the business of Pride or Money: and by this time they understand that their Religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth, to the coldness and infirmities of old age. The remedy of which is only a diligent spirit and a busic Religion, a great industry and a full portion of time inholy offices: that as the Oracle said to the Cirrheans, notes diesque belligerandum, they could not be happy unless they waged war night and day; so, unless we perpetually sight against our own Vices, and repel our Ghostly enemies and stand upon our guard, we must stand for ever in the state of babes in Christ, or else return to the first impersections of an unchristened soul, and an unsanctified spirit. That's the first particular.

2. The second step of our growth in Grace is, when Vertues grow habitual, apt and easie in our manners and dispositions. For although many new Converts have a great zeal, and a buse spirit, apt enough (as they think) to contest against all the difficulties of a spiritual life; yet they meet with such powerful oppositions from without, and a false heart within, that their first heats are soon broken, and either they are for ever discouraged, or are forced to march more slowly, and proceed more tem-

perately for ever after.

ΤΙω μερίτοι καπότητα κ, ίλασόν όξην έλέραι "Ριϊσίως, όλίγη μεν όδος, μάλα σ' έγιυς ναία.

It is an easie thing to commit any wickedness, for temptation and infurnity are always too near us. But God hath made care and sweat, prudence and diligence, experience and watchfulness, wisdom and labour at home, and good guides abroad, to be instruments and means to purchase Vertue.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progress and pursuit we find all the knots made plain, and the rough ways made smooth.

jam monte potitus

Now the spirit of Grace is like a new Soul within him, and he hath new appetites and new pleasures, when the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of Religion are delicious; when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, or in very inconsiderable instances, and stay not at all, but are reproached with a penitential sorrow and speedy amendment; when we do actions of Vertue quickly, frequently, and with delight: then we have grown in Grace in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin; they dare not omit their hours of prayer, and they are restless in their spirits till they have done, but they go to it as to execution; they stay from it as long as they can, and they drive like Pharaoh's chariots with the wheels off, sadly and heavily: and besides that, such persons have reserved to themselves the best part of their sacrifice, and do not give their Will to God, they do not love him with all their Heart; they are also soonest tempted to retire and sall off. Sextins Romanus resigned the honors and offices of

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the City, and betook himself to the severity of a Philosophical life: SERM. But when his unusual diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propolitions fmart, and that which was fine in discourse at a Symposiack or Academical dinner, began to sit uneasily upon him in the practice; he so despaired, that he had like to have cast himself into the Sea, to appeale the labours of his Religion; because he never had gone farther than to think it a fine thing to be a wife man : he would commend it, but he was loth to pay for it at the price that God and the Philosopher set upon it. But he that is grown in grace, and hath made Religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new man; he rests in Religion, and comforts his forrows with thinking of his Prayers, and in all croffes of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when he list, for he cares not to he may ferve God: and if you make him poor here, he is rich there, and he counts that to be his proper fervice, his work, his recreation, and

> 3. But because in the course of holy living, although the duty be regular and constant, yet the sensible relishes and the flowrings of affections, the zeal and the visible expressions do not always make the same emission; but sometimes by design, sometimes by order, and sometimes by affection we are more busie, more intire, and more intent upon the actions of Religion: in such cases we are to judge of our growth in Grace, if after every interval of extraordinary Piety the next return be more devout and more affectionate, the labor be more chearful and more active, and if Religion returns oftner, and stays longer in the same expressions, and leaves more satisfaction upon the spirit. Are your Communions more frequent? and, when they are, do ye approach nearer to God & Have you made firmer resolutions, and entertained more hearty purposes of amendment? Do you love God more dutifully, and your meighbour with a greater Charity? Do you not so easily return to the world as formerly? are not you glad when the thing is done? Do you go to your secular accounts with a more weaned affection than before? If you Communicate well, it is certain that you will still do it better: if you do not communicate well every opportunity of doing it is but a new trouble, easily excused, readily omitted, done because it is necessary, but not because we love it : and we shall find that such persons in their old age do it worst of all. And it was observed by aspanish Confessor who was also a famous Preacher, that in persons not very religious, the Confections which they made upon their Death-bed were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less Contrition than all that he had observed them to make in many years before. For so the Canes of Egypt when they newly arise from their bed of mud and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and are interrupted but with few knots, and are firing and beauteous with great distances and intervals: but when they are grown to their full length they lessen into the point of a Pyramie, and multiply their knots and joynts, interrupting the finenels and facothmess of its body. So are the steps and declentions of him that does not grow in Orace ! At lirth, when he fprings up from his impurity by the waters of Baptilis and Repentance, he grows straight and strong, and fuffers but few interruptions of Piety, and his constant courses of Religionare but rarely intermitted, till they afcend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life; then they are weak, and their Devotions often intermitted, and their breaches are frequent, and they feek excules, and labour for dispensations, and love God and Religion less

and less, till their old age, in stead of a crown of their Vertue and Perseverance, ends in levity and unprostable courses; light and useless
as the tusted seathers upon the Cane, every wind can play with it and
abuse it, but no man can make it useful. When therefore our Piety
interrupts its greater and more solemn expressions, and upon the return of the greater offices and bigger solemnities we find them to come
upon our spirits like the wave of a Tide, which retired only because it
was natural so to do, and yet came farther upon the strand at the next
rolling; when every new Consession, every succeeding Communion,
every time of separation for more solemn and intense Prayer is better
spent and more affectionate, leaving a greater relish upon the spirit, and
possessing greater portions of our affections, our reason and our choice;
then we may give God thanks, who hath given us more grace to use that
Grace, and a blessing to endeavour our duty, and a blessing upon our
endeavour.

SERM. XIV.

4. To discern our growth in Grace, we must enquire concerning our Passions, whether they be mortified and quiet, complying with our ends of Vertue, and under command. For fince the Passions are the matter of Vertue and Vice respectively, he that hath brought into his power all the strengths of the enemy, and the forts from whence he did insest him, he only hath secured his hoty walking with God. But because this thing is never perfectly done, and yet must always be doing, Grace grows according as we have finished our portions of this work. And in this we must not onely enquire concerning our passions, whether they be finful and habitually prevalent; for if they be, we are not in the state of Grace : but whether they return upon us in violences and undecencies, in transportation and unreasonable and imprudent expressions : for although a good man may be incident to a violent Paffion, and that without fin ; yet a perfect man is not, a wellgrown Christian hath seldom such sufferings; to suffer such things sometimes may stand with the being of Vertue, but not with its security. For if Passions range up and down, and transport us frequently and violently, we may keep in our Forts and in our dwellings, but our enemy is mafter of the field, and our Vertues are restrained, and apt to bestarved, and will not hold out long. A good man may be spot-ted with a violence, but a wife man will not: and he that does not add misdom to his vertue, the knowledge of Jesus Christ to his vertuous babits, will be a good man but till a ftorm come. But beyond this, inquire after the state of your Passions in actions of Religion. Some men fast to mortifie their Lust, and their fasting makes them prevish; some reprove a Vice, but they do it with much impatience; some charitably give excellent counsel, but they do that also with a pompous and proud spirit: and Passion being driven from open hostilities, is forced to march along in the retinue and troops of Vertue. And although this be rather a deception and a cosenage than an imperfection, and supposes a state of sin rather than an imperfect grace; yet because it tacitly and secretly creeps along among the circumstances of pious actions, as it spoils a Vertue in some, so it lessens it in others, and therefore is considerable also in this question.

And although no man must take accounts of his being in or out of the state of Grace by his being dispassionate, and free from all the assaults of Passion: yet, as, to the securing his being in the state of Grace, he must provide that he be not a slave of passion; so, to declare his growth in Grace, he must be sure to take the measures of his affections,

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and see that they be lessened, more apt to be suppressed, not breaking out to inconvenience and imprudences, not rifling our spirit, and drawing us from our usual and more sober tempers. Try therefore if your Fear be turned into Caution, your Lust into chaste Friendships, your Imperious spirit into prudent Government, your Revenge into Justice, your Anger into Charity, and your Peevilhness and rage into Silence and suppression of language. Is our ambition changed into vertuous and noble thoughts? can we emulate without Envie? Is our Covetousness lessen'd into good husbandry, and mingled with Alms, that we may certainly discern the love of money to be gone? Do we leave to despile our inferiours? and can we willingly endure to admit him that excells us in any gift or grace whatfoever, and to commend it without abatement, and mingling allays with the commendation, and disparagements to the man? If we be arrived but thus far, it is well, and we must go farther. But we use to think that all disaffections of the body are removed, if they be changed into the more tolerable, although we have not an athletick health, or the strength of Porters or Wrastlers. For although it be felicity to be quit of all Passion that may be finful or violent, and part of the happiness of Heaven shall consist in that freedom; yet our growth in Grace consists in the remission and lessening of our Passions : only he that is incontinent in his Lust, or in his Anger, in his desires of Money or of Honour, in his Revenge or in his Fear, in his Joys or in his Sorrows; that man is not grown at all in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This only; in the scrutiny and consequent judgement concerning our Passions, it will concern the curiosity of our care to watch against Passions in the restex act, against Pride, or Lust, complacency, and peevishness attending upon Vertue. For he was noted for a vain person, who, being overjoyed for the cure of his Pride, (as he thought) cried out to his wife, Cerne, Dionysia, deposui Fastum, Behold, I have laid aside all my Pride: and of that very dream the filly man thought he had reason to boast; but confidered not that it was an act of Pride, and Levity belides. If thou halt given a noble present to thy friend, if thou hast rejected the unjust de-fire of thy Prince, if thou hast endured thirst and hunger for Religion or Continence, if thou hast refused an offer like that which was made to Joseph; sit down and rest in thy good Conscience, and do not please thy self in opinions and phantastick noises abroad, and do not despise him that did not do so as thou hast done, and reprove no man with an upbraiding circumstance: for it will give thee but an ill return and a contemptible reward, if thou shalt overlay thy infant-Vertue, or drown it with a flood of breast-milk.

SERMON XV.



PART II.

E is well grown in or towards the state of Grace, who is more patient of a sharp Reproof than of a secret Flattery. For a Reprehension contains so much mortification to the Pride and complacencies of a man, is so great an affront to an easte and undisturbed person, is so empty of pleasure and so full of prosit, that he must needs love Vertue in a great degree who can take in that which only serves her end, and is displeasant to himself and all his gaieties. A severe reprehender of another's Vice comes dressed like Jacob when he went to cozen his Brother of the Blessing; his outside is rough and hairy, but the voice is Jacob's voice: rough hands and a healthful language get the Blessing, even against the will of him that shall feel it; but he that is patient and eaven, not apt to excuse his fault, that is less apt to anger, or to scorn him that snatches him rudely from the slames of Hell, he is Vertues Confessor, and suffers these lesser stripes for that interest which will end in spiritual and eternal benedictions.

They who are furious against their Monitors are incorrigible : but it is one degree of meekness to suffer discipline; and a meek man cannot easily be an ill man, especially in the present instance; he appears, at least, to have a healthful constitution; he hath good flesh to heal; his spirit is capable of medicine; and that man can never be despaired of, who hath a disposition so near his health as to improve all Physick, and whose nature is relieved from every good accident from without. But that which I observe is, That this is not only a good disposition towards Repentance and restitution, but is a sign of growth in Grace, according as it becomes natural, easie, and habitual. Some men chide themselves for all their mildemeanours, because they would be represented to the censures and opinions of other men with a fair Character, and such as need not to be reproved: Others out of inconsideration sleep in their own dark rooms, and, until the charity of a Guide or of a friend draws the curtain, and lets in a beam of light, dream on, until the grave opens, and Hell devours them: But if they be call'd upon by the grace of God, let down with a sheet of counsels and friendly precepts, they are presently inclined to be obedient to the Heavenly monitions; but unless they be dressed with circumstances of honour and civility, with arts of entertainment and infinuation, they are rejected utterly, or received unwillingly. Therefore although upon any terms to endure a sharp reproof be a good sign of amendment; yet the growth of Grace is not properly signified by every fuch sufferance: For when this disposition begins, amendment also begins, and goes on in proportion to the increment of this. To endure a Reproof without adding a new fin is the first step to amendment; that is, to endure it without scorn, or hatred, or indignation. 2. The next is to fuffer Reproof without excusing our selves: For he that is apt to excuse himself is only desirous in a civil manner to set the Reproof aside, and to represent

represent the charitable Monitor to be too hasty in his judgment, and de-SERM. ceived in his information; and the fault to dwell there, not with himself. 3. Then he that proceeds in this instance admits the Reprovers sermon or discourse without a private regret: he hath no secret murmurs or unwillinguesses to the humiliation, but is only ashamed that he should deserve it; but for the Reprehension it self, that troubles him not, but he looks on it as his own medicine, and the others Charity. 4. But if to this he adds, that he voluntarily confesses his own fault, and of his own accord vomits out the loads of his own intemperance, and eases his spirit of the infection; then it is certain he is not only a professed and hearty enemy against sin, but a zealous and a prudent and an active person against all its interest, and never counts himself at ease but while he rests upon the banks of Sion, of at the gates of the Temple; never pleased but in Vertue and Religion: Then he knows the state of his Soul, and the state of his danger; he reckons it no abjection to be abased in the face of man, so he may be gracious in the eyes of God: And that's a fign of a good grace and a holy wildom; that man is grown in the grace of God, and in the knowledg of our Lord Jesus Christ. Justus in principio sermonis est accusator sui, said the Wife man, The righteous accuseth himself in the beginning; that is, quick-ly, lest he be prevented. And certain it is, he cannot be either wise or good, that had rather have a real fin within him, than that a good man should believe him to be a repenting sinner; that had rather keep his crime, than lofe bis reputation; that is, rather to be fo, than to be thought fo; rather be without the favour of God than of his neighbour. Diogenes once fpied a young man coming out of a Tavern or place of entertainment; who perceiving himself observed by the Philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might (if possible) preserve his same with that severe person. But Diogenes told him, Quanto magis intraveris, tanto magis eris in Caupona. The more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen. And he that conceals his sin. still retains that which he counts his shame and his burthen. Hippocrates was noted for an ingenuous person, that he published and confessed his error concerning the Sutures of the Head: and all Ages since Saint Austin have called him pious, for writing his book of Retractations, in which he published his former ignorances and mistakes, and so set his shame off to the world invested with a garment of modesty, and above half changed before they were seen. I did the rather insist upon this particular, because it is a consideration of huge concernment, and yet much neglected in all its instances and degrees. We neither consess our shame, nor endure it ; we are privately troubled, and publickly excuse it; we turn Charity into bitterness, and our Reproof into contumacy and scorn: and who is there amongft us that can endure a personal charge, or is not to be taught his personal duty by general discoursings, by parable and apologue, by acts of infinuation and wary distances? But by this state of perfons we know the eltate of our own spirits.

When God sent his Prophets to the people, and they stoned them with stones, and sawed them asunder, and cast them into dungeons, and made them beggars, the people fell into the condition of Babylon, Quam curavimus, o non est sanata; We healed her (said the Prophets) but she would not be cured: Derelinquamus eam, that's her doom; let her enjoy her fins, and all the fruits of fin laid up in treasures of wrath against the day of

engeance and retribution.

6. He that is grown in Grace and the knowledge of Christ esteems no fin to be little or contemptible, none fit to be cherished or indulged to.

For it is not only inconsistent with the love of God to entertain any undecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases him; but he SERM. always remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things, whither the grace of God hath already brought him : Hethinks of his prayers and tears, his restless nights and his daily fears, his late escape and his present danger, the ruines of his former state and the difficulty and imperfect reparations of this new, his proclivity and aptness to Vice, and natural aversness and uneasse inclinations to the strictness of holy living; and when these are considered truly, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any beginnings of a state of life contrary to that which withis much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies, he hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for Heaven. And so it must be; for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say, as Lot did when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, Alas, Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live? And it is not therefore to be entertained because it is little; for it is the more without excuse if it be little, the temptations to it are not great, the allurements not mighty, the promiles not infnaring, the refiftance easie; and a wife man confiders, it is a greater danger to be overcome by a little sin, than by a great one: a greater danger (I say ;) not directly but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person: For he that cannot overcome a small crime is in the state of infirmity, so great, that he perishes infallibly when he is arrested by the fins of a stronger temptation; but he that easily can, and yet will not, he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kis the Apples of Paradile, or feast himself with the parings, fince he is by some displeasing instrument affrighted from glutting himself with the Forbidden Fruit in ruder and bigger in-But the well-grown Christian is curious of his newly trimmed Soul, and, like a nice person with clean clothes, is careful that no spot or Stain fully the virgin-whiteness of his robe: whereas another, whose Albes of Baptism are fullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what paths he treads, and a shower of dire changes not his state who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity. It makes men negligent and easie, when they have an opinion or certain knowledge that they are persons extraordinary in nothing, that a little care will not mend them, that another fin cannot make them much worse: But it is a sign of a tender Conscience and a reformed spirit, when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit upon its guard, when too free a merriment is wiped off with a figh and a fad thought, and a fevere recollection, and a holy prayer. Polycletse was wont to fay, That they had work enough to do who were to make a curious picture of elay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar. A man's spirit is naturally careless of baser and uncostly materials; but if a man be to work in gold, then he will fave the filings of his dust, and suffer not a grain to perish: And when a man hath laid his foundations in precious Stones, he will not build vile matter, stubble and dirt, upon it. So it is in the spirit of a man: If he have built upon the Rock Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good statute in Christ, he will not easily dishonour his building, nor lose his labours, by an incurious entertainment of vanities and little instances of sin; which as they can never fatisfie any Lust or appetite to sin, so they are like a flie in a box of



ointment, or like little follies to a wife man; they are extremely full of SERM. dishonour and disparagement, they disarray a man's Soul of his Vertue. and dishonour him for cockle-shells and baubles, and tempt to a greater folly; which every man who is grown in the knowledge of Christ thereof fore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse with a fear as great as his hopes of Heaven are and knows that the entertainment of small sins does but entice a man's resolutions to disband; they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in

> 7. He that is grown in Grace pursues Vertue for its own interest, purely and simply, without the mixture and allay of collateral designs and equally-inclining purpoles. God in the beginning of our returns to him entertains us with promises and threatnings, the apprehensions of temporal advantages, with fear and shame, and with reverence of friends and secular respects, with reputation and coercion of humane Laws; and at first men snatch at the lesser and lower ends of Vertue: and such rewards as are visible, and which God sometimes gives in hand to entertain our weak and imperfect desires. The young Philosophers were very forward to get the precepts of their Sect, and the rules of severity, that they might discourse with Kings, not that they might reform their own manners: and some men study to get the ears and tongues of the people rather than to gain their Souls to God; and they obey good Laws for fear of punishment, or to preserve their own peace; and some are worse, they do good deeds out of spite, and preach Christ out of envy, or to lessen the authority and fame of others. Some of these lessen the excellency of the act, others spoil it quite : it is in some imperfect, in others criminal; in some it is consistent with a beginning infant-grace, in others it is an argument of the state of sin and death: but in all cases the wellgrown Christian, he that improves or goes forward in his way to Heaven, brings Vertue forth, not into discourses and panegyricks, but into his life and manners. His Vertue although it serves many good ends accidentally; yet by his intention it only suppresses his inordinate Passions makes him temperate and chast, casts out his devils of Drunkenness and Lust, Pride and Rage, Malice and Revenge; it makes him useful to his brother and a servant of God. And although these flowers cannot chuse but please his eye, and delight his smell; yet he chuses to gather honey and licks up the Dew of Heaven, and fealts his spirit upon the Manna, and dwells not in the collateral utages and accidental sweetnesses which dwell at the gates of other Senles, but, like a Bee, loads his thighes with wax, and his bag with honey, that is, with the uleful parts of Vertue, in order to Holiness and felicity. Of which the best figns and notices we can take will be; If we as earnestly pursue Vertues which are acted in private, as those whose scene lies in publick; if we pray in private, under the only eye of God and his ministring Angels, as in Churches; if we give our Alms in secret, rather than in publick; if we take more pleafure in the just satisfaction of our Consciences, than securing our reputation; if we rather pursue Innocence, than seek an excuse; if we defire to please God, though we sole our same with men; if we be just to the poorest servant as to the greatest Prince; if we chuse to be among the jewels of God, though we be the περιοθάρματα, the off-scouring of the world; if when we are secure from witnesses and accusers, and not obnoxious to the notices of the Law, we think our selves obliged by Conscience and practice, and live accordingly: then our services and intenfrom in Vertue are right, then we are past the twilights of Conversion,

and the umbrages of the World, and walk in the light of God, of his Word, and of his Spirit, of Grace and Reason, as becometh not babes, SERM but men in Christ Jesus. In this progress of Grace I have not yet expressed, that perfect persons should serve God out of mere love of God and the Divine excellencies, without the considerations of either Heaven or Hell; such a thing as that is talked of in mystical Theology. And I doubt not but many good persons come to that growth of Charity, that the goodness and excellency of God are more incumbent and actually pressing upon their spirit than any considerations of reward. But then I shall add this, that when persons come to that height of Grace, (or Contemplation rather) and they love God for himself, and do their duties in order to the fruition of him and his pleasure; all that is but Heaven in another sense, and under another name: just as the mystical Theology is the highest duty, and the choicest part of Obedience under a new method. But in order to the present, that which I call a signification of our growth in Grace is, a pursuance of Vertue upon such reasons as are propounded to us as motives in Christianity, (such as are to glorifie God, and to enjoy his Promises in the way and in our countrey, to avoid the displeasure of God, and to be united to his glories;) and then to exercise Vertue in such parts and to such purposes as are useful to good life, and profitable to our neighbours; not to such only where they serve reputation, or secular ends. For though the great Physician of our Souls hath mingled profits and pleasures with Vertue, to make its chalice sweet and apt to be drank off; yet he that takes out the sweet ingredient, and feasts his palate with the less wholesome part, because it is delicious, serves a low end of Sense or interest, but serves not God at all; and as little does benefit to his Soul. Such a person is like Homer's Bird, deplumes himself to seather all the naked Callows that he fees; and holds a taper that may light others to Heaven, while he burns his own fingers: but a well-grown per-fon, out of habit and choice, out of love and Vertue and just intention, goes on his journey in straight ways to Heaven, even when the bridle and coercion of Laws, or the spurs of interest or reputation are laid aside; and desires witnesses of his actions, not that he may advance his fame, but for reverence and fear, and to make it still more necessary to do holy things.

8. Some men there are in the beginning of their holy walking with God, and while they are babes in Christ, who are presently busied in delights of Prayers, and rejoyce in publick Communion, and count all folemn Assemblies festival; but as they are pleased with them, so they can easily be without them. It is a sign of common and vulgar love, only to be pleased with the company of a Friend, and to be as well without him: Amoris at morfum qui vere senserit, He that has felt the sting of a sharp and very dear affection, is impatient in the absence of his beloved object: the Soul that is fick and swallowed up with holy fire, loves nothing else; all pleasures else seem unsavory, company is troublesome, visiters are tedious, homilies of comfort are flat, and useless. The pleasures of Vertue to a good and perfect man, are not like the perfumes of Nard-Piftick, which is very delightful when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble, we are well enough without it : but Vertue is like bunger and thirft it must be satisfied or we die. And when we feel great longings after Religion, and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the Word and Sacraments is more intolerable, and we think our selves really most miserable when the Church-doors are shut against us, or like the Christians in the persecution of the Vandals, who thought it worse

n than death that their Bishops were taken from them; if we understand SERM. Excommunication or Church-censures (abating the disreputation and secular appendages) in the sence of the Spirit to be a misery next to Hell it self; then we have made a good progress in the Charity and Grace of God: till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or impersect, in the fame degree in which our affections are cold and our defires remiss. For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats; and an hour of fervour is more pleafing to God than a

month of lukewarmness and indifferency.

9. But as some are active only in the presence of a good object, but remils and careless for the want of it; so, on the other side, an infant-grace is safe in the absence of a Temptation, but falls easily when it is in prefence. He therefore that would understand if he be grown in Grace, may consider if his safety consists only in peace, or in the strength of the spirit. It is good that we will not feek out opportunities to fin; but are not we too apprehensive of it when it is presented? or do we not link under it when it presses us? Can we hold our tapers near the slames, and not suck it in greedily like Naphtha or prepared Nitre? or can we, like the Children of the Captivity, walk in the midst of flames, and not be scorched or consumed? Many men will not (like Judah) go into high ways, and untie the girdles of Harlots: But can you reject the importunity of a beauteous and an imperious Lady, as Joseph did? We had need pray that we be not led into temptation; that is, not only into the possession, but not into the allurements and neighbourhood of it; left by little and little our strongest resolutions be untwist, and crack in sunder like an easie cord severed into single threds: But if we, by the necessity of our lives and manner of living, dwell where a temptation will affault us, then to relift is the fign of a great grace; but such a fign, that without it the grace turns to wantonness, and the man into a beast, and an Angel into a Devil. R. Moses will not allow a man to be a true Penitent until he hath left all his fin, and in all the like circumstances refuses those Temptations under which formerly he sinned and died: and indeed it may happen that fuch a trial only can fecure our judgement concerning our felves. And although to be tried in all the same accidents be not fafe, nor always contingent, and in such cases it is sufficient to relist all the Temptations we have, and avoid the rest, and decree against all; yet if it please God we are tempted, as David was by his eyes, or the Martyts by tortures, or Joseph by his wanton Mistress; then to stand fure, and to ride upon the temptation like a Ship upon a wave, or to stand like a rock in an impetuous storm, that's the sign of a great Grace, and of a wellgrown Christian.

10. No man is grown in Grace but he that is ready for every work, that chuses not his employment, that refuses no imposition from God or his Superior. A ready hand, an obedient heart, and a willing chearful soul in all the work of God, and in every office of Religion, is a great index of a good proficient in the ways of Godliness. The heart of a man is like a wounded hand or arm, which if it be so cured that it can only move one way, and cannot turn to all postures and natural uses, it is but imperfect, and still half in health, and half-wounded : So is our spirit; if it be apt for prayer and close-fisted in Alms, if it be found in Faith and dead in Charity, if it be religious to God and unjust to our neighbour, there wants some integral part, or there is a lameness: and the deficiency in any one duty implies the guilt of all, (faid Saint James;) and Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quavis particulari, every fault spoils a Grace:

But one Grace alone cannot make a good man. But as to be univerfal in our Obedience is necessary to our being in the state of Grace; so, readily SER M. to change imployment from the better to the worfe from the honourable to the poor, from useful to seemingly unprofitable, is a good character of a well-grown Christian, if he takes the worst part with indifferency; and a spirit equally chusing all the events of the Divine providence. Can you be content to descend from ruling of a Province to the keeping of a Herd, from the work of an Apostle to be confined into a prison, from disputing before Princes to a conversation with Shepherds? Can you be willing to all that God is willing, and suffer all that he chuses, as willingly as if you had chosen your own fortune? In the same degree in which you can conform to God, in the same you have approached towards that perfection whither we must by degrees arrive in our journey towards Heaven

This is not to be expected of beginners; for they must be entired with apt imployments: and it may be their office and work so fits their spirits; that it makes them first in love with it, and then with God for giving it. And many a man goes to Heaven in the days of peace, whose Faith and Hope and Patience would have been dashed in pieces, if he had fallen into a storm of persecution. Oppression will make a wife man mad (faid solomon:) there are some usages that will put a sober person out of all Patience, such which are besides the customs of this life, and contrary to all his hopes, and unworthy of a person of his quality. And when Nero durst not die, yet when his servants told him that the Senators had condemned him to be put to death more Majorum, that is, by scourging like a Slave, he was forced into preternatural confidence; and fell upon his own fword. But when God fo changes thy estate, that thou art fallen into accidents to which thou art no otherwise disposed but by Grace and a holy spirit, and yet thou canst pass through them with quietness, and do the work of suffering, as well as the works of profeerous imployment; this is an argument of a great Grace and an extraordinary spirit. For many persons in a change of fortune person, who if they had still been prosperous had gone to prison; being tempted in a persecution to perjuries and Apostasie, and unhandsom compliances, and Hypocrisie, and Irreligion: and many men are brought to Vertue, and to God, and to selicity, by being persecuted and made unprosperous. And these are effects of a more absolute and irrespective Predestination. But when the Grace of God is great and prudent, and masculine, and well-grown, it is unalter'd in all changes; fave only that every accident that is new and violent brings him neater to God, and makes him with greater caution and feverity to dwell in Vertue.

11. Lastly, some there are who are firm in all great and foreseen changes, and have laid up in the store-houses of the spirit (Reason and Religion)arguments and discourses enough to defend them against all violencies, and stand at watch so much that they are safe where they can consider and deliberate; but there may be something wanting yet: and in the direct line, in the strait progress to Heaven, I call that an infallible fign of a great Grace, and indeed the greatest degree of a great Grace, when a man is prepared against sudden invasions of the spirit, surreptitious and extemporary affaults. Many a valiant person dares fight a Battel, who yet will be timorous and surprised in a mid-night Alarm, or if he falls into a River. And how many differeet persons are there who, if you offer them a fin, and give them time to confider, and tell them of it before-hand, will rather die than be perjured, or tell a deliberate lie, or

break a promise; who (it may be) tell many sudden lies, and excuse themselves, and break their promises, and yet think themselves safe enough, and fleep without either affrightments, or any apprehension of dishonour done to their persons or their Religion? Every man is not armed for all sudden arrests of Passions. Few men have cast such fetters upon their Lusts, and have their Passions in so strict confinement, that they may not be over-run with a midnight-floud, or an unlooked-for inundation. He that does not start when he is smitten suddenly, is a constant person. And that is it which I intend in this instance; that he is a perfect man, and well grown in Grace, who hath so habitual a resolution, and so unhasty and wary a spirit, as that he decrees upon no act before he hath confidered maturely, and changed the fudden occasion into a sober counsel. David by chance spied Bathsheba washing her self, and being furprised, gave his heart away before he could consider; and when it was once gone, it was hard to recover it and sometimes a man is betrayed by a fudden opportunity, and all things firted for his fin ready at the door ; the act stands in all its dress, and will not stay for an answer; and inconsideration is the defence and guard of the Sin, and makes that his Conscience can the more easie swallow it: what shall the man do then? Unless he be strong by his old strengths, by a great Grace, by an habitual Vertue and a fober unmoved spirit, he falls and dies the death, and hath no new strengths, but such as are to be employed for his recovery; none for his present guard, unless upon the old stock, and if he be a well-grown Christian.

These are the parts, acts, and offices of our growing in Grace; and yet I have sometimes called them signs: but they are Signs, as eating and drinking are figns of life; they are figns to as also they are parts of life; and these are parts of our growth in Grace, so that a man can grow in Grace to no other purpose but to these or the like improvements.

Concerning which I have a caution or two to interpoleto hu The growth of Grace is to be estimated as other moral things are not according to the growth of things natural. Grace does not grow by observations on, and a continual offinx, and a conftant proportion; and a man cannot call himfelf to an account for the growth of every day, or week, or moneth: but in the greater portions of our life, in which we have had many occasions and inflances to exercise and improve our Vertues, we may call our selves to account : but iris a snare to our Consciences to be examined in the growth of Grace in every thort revolution of folemn

duty, nas against every Communion, or great Festival. and the military base of Growth in Grace is not always to be discerned either in single instances, or in single Graces. Not in single instances: For every time we are to exercise a Vertue we are not in the same natural dispositions, nor do we meet with the same circumstances, and it is not always necessary that the next act should be more earnest and intense than the former; alt single adoare to be done after the manner of men, and therefore are not always capable of encreasing, and they have their times beyond which they can-not easily swell; and therefore if it be a good act and zealous, it may proceed from a well-grown Grace and yet a younger and weaker person may do some acts as great and as religious as it. But neither do fingle Graces always afford a regular and certain judgment in this affair. For some persons with first had rather die than be unchast or perjured and greater love than this no man bath, that he lay down his life for God the cannot eafily grow in the fubRance of that act; and if other persons, or himself in process of time, do it more chearfully or with fewer fears, it is not al

ways a fign of a greater Grace, but sometimes of greater collateral affistances, or a better habit of body, or more fortunate circumstances: For SER M. he that goes to the block trembling for Christ, and yet endures his death certainly, and endures his trembling too, and runs through all his infirmities and the bigger temptations, looks not so well many times in the eyes of men, but luffers more for God, than those confident Martyrs that courted death in the Primitive Church; and therefore may be much dearer in the eyes of God. But that which I say in this particular is, that a smallness in one is not an argument of the imperfection of the whole estate: because God does not always give to every man occasions to exercise, and therefore not to improve, every Grace; and the passive Vertues of a Christian are not to be expected to grow so fast in prosperous, as in suffering Christians. But in this Case we are to take accounts of our selves by the improvement of those Graces which God makes to happen often in our lives; fuch as are Charity and Temperance in young men, Liberality and Religion in aged persons, Ingenuity and Humility in Scholars, Justice in Merchants and Artificers, Forgiveness of injuries in great men and persons tempted by Law-suits: for since Vertues grow like other moral habits, by use, diligence and assiduity, there where God hath appointed our work and our instances, there we must consider concerning our Growth in Grace; in other things we are but beginners. But it is not likely that God will trie us concerning degrees hereafter, in fuch things of which in this world he was sparing to give us opportu-

3. Be careful to observe that these Rules are not all to be understood negatively, but positively and affirmatively: that is, that a man may conclude that he is grown in Grace if he observes these characters in himself which I have here discoursed of but he must not conclude negatively, that he is not grown in Grace, if he cannot observe such signal Testimonies: For sometimes God covers the Graces of his servants, and hides the beauty of his tabernacle with goats hair and the skins of beafts, that he may rather fuffer them to want present comfort than the grace of Humility: for it is not necessary to preserve the gayeties and their spiritual pleasures; but if their humility fails, (which may eafily be under the fun-shine of conspicuous and illustrious Graces) their Vertues and themselves perish in a sad declension. But sometimes men have not skill to make a judgment; and all this discourse seems too artificial to be tried by, in the hearty purposes of Religion. Sometimes they let pass much of their life, even of their better days, without observance of particulars; sometimes their cases of Conscience are intricate, or allayed with unavoidable infirmities; sometimes they are so uninstructed in the more secret parts of Religion, and there are fo many illusions and accidental miscarriages, that if we shall conclude negatively in the present Question, we may produce scruples infinite, but understand nothing more of our state, and do much less of our duty.

4. In confidering concerning our growth in Grace, let us take more care to consider matters that concern Justice and Charity, than that concern the Vertue of Religion; because in this there may be much, in the other there cannot easily be any illusion and cozenage. That is a good Religion that believes, and trufts, and hopes in God through Jesus Christ, and for his take does all Justice and all Charity that he can; and our Bleffed Lord gives no other description of love to God, but obedience and keeping his Commandments. Justice and Charity are like the matter, Religion is the form of Christianity: but although the form be more noble

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noble and the principle of life, yet it is less discernable, less material, and less sensible; and we judge concerning the form by the matter, and by material accidents, and by actions: and so we must of our Religion, that is, of our love to God, and of the efficacy of our Prayers, and the usefulness of our Fastings; we must make our judgments by the more material parts of our duty, that is, by Sobriety, and by Justice, and by

Charity

I am much prevented in my intention for the perfecting of this fo very material consideration: I shall therefore only tell you, that to these parts and actions of a good life, or of our Growth in Grace, some have added some accidental considerations, which are rather signs than Parts of it. Such are: 1. To praise all good things, and to study to imitate what we praise. 2. To be impatient that any man should excel us not out of envy to the person, but of noble emulation to the excellency. For so Themi-ftocles could not sleep after the great Victory at Marathon purchased by Miltiades, till he had made himself illustrious by equal services to his Countrey. 3. The bearing of fickness patiently, and ever with improvement, and the addition of some excellent principle, and the firm pursuing it. 4. Great Devotion, and much delight in our Prayers. 5. Frequent inspirations and often whispers of the Spirit of God prompting us to Devotion and Obedience; especially if we add to this a constant and ready Obedience to all those holy invitations. 6. Offering peace to them that have injured me, and the abating of the circumstances of honour or of right, when either Justice or Charity is concerned in it. 7. Love to the Brethren. 8. To behold our companions, or our inferiours, full of honour and fortune; and if we fit still at home and murmur not, or if we can rejoyce both in their honour and our own quiet, that's a fair work of a good man. And now, 9. After all this, I will not trouble you with reckoning a freedom from being tempted, not only from being overcome, but from being tried: For though that be a rare felicity, and hath in it much fafety; yet it hath less honour, and fewer instances of Vertue, unless it proceed from a confirmed and heroical Grace; which is indeed a little image of Heaven and of a celestial Charity, and never happens fignally to any, but to old and very eminent persons. 10. But some also add an excellent Habit of body and material Passions, such as are chast and vertuous Dreams; and suppose, that as a disease abuses the fancy, and a Vice does prejudice it, so may an excellent Vertue of the Soul smooth and calcine the body, and make it ferve perfectly, and without rebellious indispositions. 11. Others are in love with Mary Magdalens tears, and fancy the hard knees of Saint James, and the fore eyes of Saint Peter, and the very recreations of S. John : Prob ! quam virtute preditos omnia decent! thinking all things become a good man, even his gestures and And though this may proceed from a great love of little incuriolities. Vertue, yet because some men do thus much and no more, and this is to be attributed to the lustre of Vertue, which shines a little through a mans eye-lids, though he perverfely winks against the light; yet (as the former of these two is too Metaphysical, so is the latter too Phantastical) he that by the foregoing material parts: and proper fignifications of a growing Grace does not understand his own condition, must be content to work on still super totam materiam, without considerations of particulars; he must pray earnestly, and watch diligently, and consult with prudent Guides, and ask of God great measures of his Spirit, and bunger and thirst after righteousness: for he'that does so, shall certainly be satisfied. And if he understands not his present good condition, yet if he be not wanting

in the down-right endeavours of Piety, and in hearty purposes, he shall then find that he is grown in Grace, when he springs up in the resurrection SER M. of the just, and shall be ingrasted upon a tree of Paradise, which beareth VVI fruit for ever, Glory to God, rejoycing to Saints and Angels, and eternal felicity to his own pious though undifferning Soul.



Prima sequentem, honestum est in secundis aut tertiis consistere. Cicero.

Sermon XVI. Of GROWTH in SIN:

OR,

The feveral States and Degrees of Sinners,

The manner how they are to be treated.

Jude Epist. Ver. 22, 23.

And of some have compassion, making a difference : * And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.



AN hath but one entrance into the world, but a thoufand ways to pass from thence. And as it is in the natural, so it is in the Spiritual: Nothing but the union of Faith and Obedience can secure our Regeneration, and our New birth, and can bring us to see the light of Heaven; but there are a thousand passages of turn-

of Heaven; but there are a thouland pauages or turning into darkness. And it is not enough that our bodies are exposed to so many sad infirmities and dishonourable imperfections, unless our Soul also be a subject capable of so many diseases, irregular passions, false principles, accursed habits and degrees of perverseness, that the very kinds of them are reducible to a method, and make up the part of a Science. There are variety of Stages and descents to death 5 as there are diversity of torments, and of sad regions of misery in Hell, which is the centre and Kingdom of sorregions of misery in Hell, which is the centre and Kingdom of forrows. But that we may a little refresh the sadnesses of this consideration; for every one of these stages of Sin, God hath measured out a proportion of Mercy: for, If Sin abounds, Grace shall much more abound; and God hath concluded all under sin, not with purposes to destroy us, but, ut omnium misereatur, that he might have mercy upon all; that light may break forth from the deepest inclosures of darkness, and Mercy may rejoyce upon the recessions of Justice, and Grace may triumph upon the fuines of Sin, and God may be glorified in the miracles of our Conversion, and the wonders of our preservation, and glories of our being saved.

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There is no state of Sin, but, if we be persons capable (according to SERM. God's method of healing) of receiving antidotes, we shall find a sheet of Mercy spread over our wounds and nakedness. If our diseases be small, almost necessary, scarce avoidable; then God does, and so we are commanded to cure them, and cover them with a veil of pity, compassion, and gentle remedies: if our evils be violent, inveterated, gangrened, and incorporated into our nature by evil customs, they must be pulled from the flames of Hell with censures, and cauteries, and punishments, and sharp remedies, quickly and rudely; their danger is present and sudden, its effect is quick and intolerable, and there are no fost counsels then to be entertained; they are already in the fire, but they may be faved for all that. So great, so infinite, so miraculous is God's mercy, that he will not give a finner over, though the hairs of his head be finged with the flames of Hell: God's desires of having us to be saved continue, even when we begin to be damned; even till we will not be faved, and are gone beyond God's method, and all the revelations of his kindness. And certainly that is a bold and a mighty sinner whose iniquity is swell'd be-yond all the bulk and heap of God's revealed loving-kindness: If Sin hath swell'd beyond Grace, and superabounds over it, that sin is gone beyond the measures of a man; such a man is removed beyond all the malice of humane nature, into the evil and spite of Devils and accursed Spirits; there is no greater sadness in the world than this. God hath not appointed a remedy in the vast treasures of Grace for some men, and some sins; they have sinned like the falling Angels, and having over-run the ordinary evil inclinations of their nature, they are without the protections of the Divine Mercy, and the conditions of that Grace which was defigned to fave all the world, and was fufficient to have faved twenty. This is a condition to be avoided with the care of God and his Angels, and all the whole industry of man. In order to which end my purpose now is to remonstrate to you the several States of Sin and Death, together with those Remedies which God had proportioned out to them; that we may observe the evils of the least, and so avoid the intolerable mischies of the greater, even of those sins which still are within the power and possibilities of Recovery; lest insensibly we fall into those sins and into those circumstances of person for which Christ never died, which the Holy Ghost never means to cure, and which the eternal God never will pardon: for there are of this kind more than commonly men imagine, whilest they amuse their spirits with gayeties and false principles, till they have run into horrible impleties, from whence they are not willing to withdraw their foot, and God is refolved never to fnatch and force them thence.

F. [Of some have compassion.] And these I shall reduce to four heads or orders of men and actions all which have their proper cure proportionable to their proper state, gentle remedies to the lesser irregularities of the Soul. 1. The first are those that sin without observation of their particular state; either because they are uninstructed in the special cases of Conscience, or because they do an evil against which there is no express Commandment. It is a fad calamity, that there are so many millions of men and women that are entred into a state of sickness and danger, and yet are made to believe they are in perfect health; and they do actions concening which they never made a question whether they were just or no, nor were ever taught by what names to call them. For while they obferve that Modesty is sometimes abused by a false name, and called Clownishneß and want of breeding; and Contentedneß and temperate living is suspected to be want of courage and noble thoughts; and severity of life is called

imprudent

imprudent and unsociable; and simplicity and hearty honesty is counted foolish and unpolitick; they are easily tempted to honour Prodigality and DERM. foolish dissolution of their estates with the title of liberal and noble usages; Timorousness is called Caution, Rashness is called Quickness of Spirit, Covetousness is Frugality, Amorousness is Society and gentile, Peevishness and Anger is Courage, Flattery is humane and courteous: and under these false veils Vertue slips away, (like Truth from under the hand of them that fight for her) and leaves Vice dressed up with the same imagery, and the fraud not discovered till the day of Recompences, when men are distinguished by their rewards. But so men think they sleep freely when their spirits are loaden with a Lethargy, and they call a Hectick-feaver the vigour of a natural heat, till nature changes those less-discerned states into the notorious images of death. Very many men never consider whether they sin or no in 10000 of their actions, every one of which is very disputable, and do not think they are bound to consider: these men are to be pitied and instructed, they are to be called upon to use Religion like a daily diet; their Consciences must be made tender, and their Catechism enlarged; teach them, and make them sensible, and they are cured.

But the other in this place are more considerable: Men sin without observation, because their actions have no restraint of an express Commandment, no letter of the Law to condemn them by an express fentence. And this happens, when the crime is comprehended under a general notion, without the instancing of particulars: For if you fearch over all the Scripture, you shall never find Incest named and marked with the black character of death; and there are divers forts of uncleanness to which Scripture therefore gives no name, because she would have them have no being. And it had been necessary that God should have described all particulars, and all kinds, if he had not given Reason to man: For so it is fit that a Guide should point out every turning, if he be to teach a Child or a Fool to return unto his father's roof. But he that bids us avoid Intemperance for fear of a Feaver, supposes you to be sufficiently instructed that you may avoid the Plague : and, when to look upon a woman with Lust is condemned, it will not be necessary to add, You must not do more, when even the least is forbidden: and when to uncover the nakedness of Noah brought an universal plague upon the posterity of Cham, it was not necessary that the Law-giver should say, You must not ascend to your Father's bed, or draw the curtains from your Sisters retirements. When the Athenians forbad to transport Figs from Athens, there was no need to name the gardens of Alcibiades; much less was it necessary to add, that Chabrias should send no plants to Sparta. Whatfoever is comprised under the general notion, and partakes of the com-mon nature, and the same iniquity, needs no special prohibition; unless we think we can mock God, and elude his holy Precepts with an abfurd trick of miltaken Logick. I am fure that will not fave us harmless from a thunderbolt.

2. Men fin without an express prohibition, when they commit a thing that is like a forbidden evil. And when Saint Paul had reckoned many works of the flesh, he adds [and such like,] all that have the same unreasonableness and carnality. For thus Polygamy is unlawful: for if it be not lawful for a Christian to put away his wife and marry another, (unless for Adultery) much less may he keep a first and take a second, when the first is not put away: If a Christian may not be drunk with Wine, neither may he be drunk with Passion; if he may not kill his neighbour,

neither then must be tempt him to sin, for that destroys him more; if he ERM. may not wound him, then he may not perswade him to Intemperance, and a drunken seaver; if it be not lawful to cozen a man, much less is it permitted that he make a man a fool, and a beast, and exposed to every man's abuse, and to all ready evils. And yet men are taught to start at the one half of these, and make no conscience of the other half : whereof some have a greater baseness than the other that are named, and all have the same unreasonableness.

3. A man is guilty, even when no Law names his action, if he does any thing that is a cause or an effect, a part or unhandsome adjunct of a forbidden instance. He that forbad all Intemperance, is as much displeased with the infinite of foolish talk that happens at such meetings, as he is at the spoiling of the drink, and the destroying the health. God cannot endure Wantonness, how can he suffer lascivious dresfings, tempting circumstances, wanton eyes, high diet? If Idleness be a sin, then all immoderate mis-spending of our time, all long and tedious games, all abfurd contrivances how to throw away a precious hour, and a day of falvation also, are against God, and against Religion. He that is commanded to be Charitable, it is also intended he should not spend his money vainly, but be a good husband and provident, that he may be able to give to the poor, as he would be to purchase a Lord-ship, or pay his Daughters portion. And upon this stock it is that Christian Religion forbids jearing and immoderate laughter, and reckons jestings amongst the things that are unseemly. This also would be con-

4. Besides the express Laws of our Religion, there is an universal line and limit to our passions and designs, which is called the analogie of Christianity; that is, the proportion of its sanctity, and the strictness of its holy precepts. This is not forbidden; but, Does this become you? Is it decent to see a Christian live in plenty and ease, and heap up money, and never to partake of Christ's Passions? There is no Law against a Judge his being a dresser of gardens, or a gatherer of Sycamore fruits; but it becomes him not, and deserves a reproof. If I do exact Justice to my neighbour, and cause him to be punished legally for all the evils he makes me suffer, I have not broken a fragment from the Stony Tables of the Law: but this is against the analogie of our Religion; it does not become a Disciple of so gentle a Master to take all advantages that he can. Christ, that quitted all the glories that were essential to him, and that grew up in his nature when he lodged in his Father's bosom; Christ, that suffered all the evils due for the sins of mankind, himself remaining most innocent; Christ, that promised persecution, injuries and affronts as part of our present portion, and gave them to his Disciples as a legacy, and gave us his Spirit to inable us to fuffer injuries, and made that the parts of suffering evils should be the matter of three or four Christian Graces, of Patience, of Fortitude, of Longanimity, and Perseverance; He that of eight Beatitudes made that five of them should be instanced in the matter of Humiliation and suffering temporal inconvenience; that bleffed Master was certainly desirous that his Disciples should take their crowns from the Cross, not from the eavenness and felicities of the world; he intended we should give something, and suffer more things, and forgive all things, all injuries what soever. And though : together with this may confilt our securing a just interest; yet in very many circumstances we shall be put to consider how far it becomes us to quit something of that, to pursue peace; and when we have secured

what we are strictly bound to, then also we must consider what becomes us, who are Disciples of such a Master, who are instructed with fuch principles, charmed with so severe Precepts, and invited with the certainty of infinite rewards. Now although this discourse may seem new and strange, and very severe, yet it is infinitely reasonable, because Christianity is a Law of Love and voluntary services; it can in no sence be confined with Laws and strict measures: well may the Ocean receive its limits, and the whole capacity of fire be glutted, and the grave have his belly fo full that it shall cast up all its bowels, and disgorge the continucd meal of so many thousand years; but love can never have a limit; and it is indeed to be swallowed up, but nothing can fill it but God, who hath no bound. Christianity is a Law for Sons, not for Servants; and God, that gives his grace without measure, and rewards without end, and acts of favour beyond our askings, and provides for us beyond our needs, and gives us Counsels beyond Commandments, intends not to be limited out by the just eavennesses and stricken measures of the words of a Commandment. Give to God full measure, shaken together, pressed down, heaped up, and running over; for God does so to us : and when we have done so to him, we are infinitely short of the least measure of what God does for us; we are still unprofitable servants. And therefore as the breaking any of the Laws of Christianity provokes God to anger, so the prevaricating in the Analogy of Christianity stirs him up to jealqusse. He hath reason to fuspect our hearts are not right with him, when we are so reserved in the matter and measures of our services : and if we will give God but just what he calls for by express mandate, it is just in him to require all of that at our hands without any abatement, and then we are fure to milcar. ty. And let us remember that when God said he was a jealous God, he expressed the meaning of it to be, he did punish to the third and fourth generation. Jealousie is like the rage of a man : but if it be also like the anger of God, it is insupportable, and will crush us into the ruines of our grave. 1

But because these things are not frequently considered, there are very many fins committed against Religion, which because the Commandment hath not marked, men refuse to mark, and think God requires no more. I am entred into a sea of matter, which I must not now prose-cute; but I shall only note this to you, That it is but reasonable we should take accounts of our lives by the proportions as well as by the express rules of our Religion, because in humane and civil actions all the nations of the world use to call their subjects to account. For that which in the accounts of men is called reputation and publick honesty, is the fame which in Religion we call analogie and proportion; in both cases there being some things which are belides the notices of Laws, and yet are the most certain confignations of an excellent Vertue. He is a base perfon that does any thing against publick honesty; and yet no man can be punished if he marries a wife the next day after his first wives funeral: and so he that prevaricates the proportions and excellent reasons of Christianity is a person without zeal and without love; and, unless care be taken of him, he will quickly be without Religion. But yet thefe, I fay, are a fort of persons which are to beused with gentleness, and treated with compassion: for no man must be handled roughly to force him to do a kindness; and coercion of Laws and severity of Judges, Serjeants and Executioners are against offenders of Commandments; but the way to cure such persons is the easiest and gentlest remedy of all others.

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are to be instructed in all the parts of duty, and invited forward by the SERM. consideration of the great rewards which are laid up for all the sons of God, who serve him without constraint, without measures and allays, even as fire burns, and as the roles grow, even as much as they can, and to all the extent of their natural and artificial capacities. For it is a thing fit for our compassion to see men settered in the iron bands of Laws, and yet to break the golden chains of Love; but all those instruments which are proper to enkindle the love of God, and to turn Fear into Charity, are the proper instances of that compassion which is to be used

towards these men.

2. The next fort of those who are in the state of sin, and yet to be handled gently and with compassion, are those who entertain themselves with the beginnings and little entrances of fin : which as they are to be more pitied because they often come by reason of inadvertency, and an unavoidable weakness in many degrees; so they are more to be taken care of, because they are undervalued, and undiscernibly run into inconvenience. When we see a Child strike a servant rudely, or jear a filly person, or wittingly cheat his play-fellow, or talk words light as the skirt of a Summer garment; we laugh and are delighted with the wit and confidence of the boy, and encourage such hopeful beginnings and in the mean time we consider not that from these beginnings he shall grow up till he become a Tyrant, an Oppressor, a Goat, and a Traitor. Nemo simul malus fit, o malus esse cerniturs sicut nec Scorpiis tum innascuntur stimuli cum pungunt: No man is discerned to be vicious so soon as he is so, and Vices have their infancy and their childhood; and it cannot be expected that in a child's age should be the Vice of a man; that were monstrous, asif he wore a Beard in his cradle; and we do not believe that a Serpent's sting does just then grow when he strikes us in a vital part; the venome and the little spear was there when it first began to creep from his little shell. And little boldnesses and looser words, and wranglings for nuts, and lying for trifles, are of the same proportion to the malice of a child; as Impudence, and Duels, and injurious Law-suits, and false witness in Judgment, and Perjuries are in men. And the case is the same when men enter upon a new stock of any sin: The Vice is at first apt to be put out of countenance, and a little thing discourages it, and it amuses the spirit with words, and phantastick images, and cheap instances of fin; and men think themselves safe because they are as yet fafe from Laws, and the fin does not as yet out-cry the healthful noise of Christ's loud cryings and intercession with his Father, nor call for thunder or an amazing judgment: but according to the old faying, The thorns of Dauphine will never fetch blood, if they do not scratch the first day; and we shall find that the little undecencies and rislings of our Souls, the first openings and disparkings of our Vertue differ only from the state of perdition, as infancy does from old age, as fickness from death; it is the entrance into those regions whither whosoever passes finally, shall lie down and groan with an eternal forrow. Now in this case it may happen that a compassion may ruine a man, if it be the pity of an indiscreet mother, and nurse the sin from its weakness to the strength of habit and impudence: The compassion that is to be used to such persons is the compassfion of a Physician or a severe Tutor: chastise thy infant-sin by discipline, and acts of Vertue; and never begin that way from whence you must return with some trouble and much shame, or else, if you proceed, you fmish your eternal ruine.

He that means to be temperate, and avoid the crime and dishonour of being a Drunkard, must not love to partake of the songs, or to bear a SER M. part in the foolish scenes of laughter, which distract wisdom, and fright her from the company. And Lauina, that was chaster than the elder sabines, and severer than her Philosophical guardian, was well instructed in the great lines of honour and cold justice to her Husband : but when > Ma the gave way to the wanton ointments and loofer circumstances of the Baia, and bathed often in Avernus, and from thence hurried to the companies and dreffings of *Lucrinus*, the quenched her honour, and gave her Vertue and her body as a spoil to the follies and intemperance of a young Gentleman. For so have I seen the little purls of a Spring sweat through the bottom of a bank, and intenetrate the stubborn pavement, till it bath made it fit for the impression of a child's foot; and it was despited, like the descending pearls of a misty morning, till it had opened its way, and made a stream large enough to carry away the ruines of the undermined strand, and to invade the neighbouring gardens: but then the despised drops were grown into an artificial river, and an intolerable mischief. So are the first entrances of sin, stopp'd with the antidotes of a hearty prayer, and checked into sobriety by the eye of a reverend man, or the counfels of a fingle Sermon: but when fuch beginnings are neglected, and our Religion hath not in it so much Philosophy as to think any thing evil as long as we can endure it, they grow up to ulcers and pestilential evils; they destroy the Soul by their abode, who at their first entry might have been killed with the pressure of a little finger.

Αρχήν ίαωθαι πολύ λώϊον ής τελουτήν.

Those men are in a condition in which they may, if they please, pity themselves; keep their green wound from sestering and uncleanness, and it will heal alone: Non procul absunt, They are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but they are not within its portion. And let me say this, that although little sins have not yet made our condition desperate, but less it easily recoverable; yet it is a condition that is quite out of God's savour: although they are not far advanced in their progress to ruine, yet they are not at all in the state of Grace: and therefore though they are to be pitied and relieved accordingly; yet that supposes the incumbency of a present misery.

3. There are some very much to be pitied and assisted because they are going into Hell, and (as matters stand with them) they cannot, or they think they cannot avoid it. Quidam ad alienum dermiunt sommum, ad alienum edunt appetitum: amare & odisse (res omnium maxime liber as subsentur: There are some persons whose life is so wholly in dependance from others, that they sleep when others please, they eat and drink according to their Master's appetite or intemperance; they are commanded to love ar bate, and are not lest free in the very Charter and privileges of nature. Misserum est, servire sub Dominis parum felicibus. For suppose the Prince or the Patron be vicious, suppose he calls his servants to bathe their souls in the goblets of intemperance; if he be also imperious, (for such persons love not to be contradicted in their vices) it is the loss of that mans fortune not to lose his Soul; and it is the servant's excuss, and he esteems it also his glory, that he can tell a merry tale, how his Master and himself did swim in drink, till they both talked like sools, and then did lie down like beasts.—Facious ques inquines, equat. There is then no difference, but that the one is the fairest Bull, and the Master of the Herd. And how many Tenants and relatives are known to have a service Con-

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fcience, and to know no affirmation or negation but such as shall serve their Landlords interest? Alas! the poor men live by it, and they must beg their bread if ever they turn recreant, or shall offer to be honest. There be some Trades whose very soundation is laid in the Vice of others; and in many others, if a thread of deceit do not quite run through all their negotiations, they decay into the sorrows of beggery: and therefore they will support their neighbours Vice, that he may support their Trade. And what would you advise those men to do, to whom a false Oath is offered to their lips, and a dagger at their heart? Their reason is surprized, and their choice is seized upon, and all their consultation is arrested; and if they did not prepare before-hand, and stand armed with Religion and perfect resolution, would not any man fall, and think that every goodman will say his case is pitiable? Although no temptation is bigger than the Grace of God, yet many temptations are greater than our strengths; and we do not live at the rate of a mighty and a victorious Grace.

Those persons which cause these vicious necessities upon their Brethren will lie low in Hell; but the others will have but small comfort in

feeling a leffer damnation.

Of the same consideration it is, when ignorant people are Catechized into false Doctrine, and know nothing but such Principles which weaken the nerves, and enfeeble the joynts of holy living; they never heard of any other: those that follow great and evil examples; the people that are ingaged in the publick fins of a kingdom which they under-frand not, and either must venture to be undone upon the strength of their own little reasonings and weak discoursings, or else must go qua itur, non qua cundum eft, there where the popular misery hath made the way plain before their eyes, though it be uneaven and dangerous to their Consciences. In these cases I am forced to reckon a Catalogue of mischiefs; but it will be hard to cure any of them. Ariftippus in his difcourses was a great flatterer of Dionysins of Sicily, and did own dodrines which might give an eafiness to some Vices, and knew not how to contradict the pleasures of his Prince 5 but seemed like a person disposed to partake of them, that the example of a Philosopher and the praclice of a King might do countenance to a shameful life. But when Dionysius sent him two women-slaves, fair and young, he sent them back, and shamed the easiness of his doctrine by the severity of his manners; he daring to be vertuous when he was alone, though in the presence of him whom he thought it necessary to flatter he had no boldness to own the Vertue. So it is with too many: if they be left alone, and that they stand unshaken with the eye of their tempter, or the authority of their Lord, they go whither their education or their custom carries them 5 but it is not in some natures to deny the face of a man, and the boldness of a finner; and, which is yet worse, it is not in most mens interest to do it. These men are in a pitiable condition, and are to be helped by the following Rules.

1. Let every man confider that he hath two relations to serve, and he stands between God and his Master, and his nearest relative: and in such cases it comes to be disputed whether interest be preserved, which of the persons is to be displeased, God or my Master, God or my Prince, God or my Friend. If we be servants of the man; remember also that I am a servant of God: add to this, that if my present service to the man be a slavery in me, and a tyranny in him, yet God's service is a noble freedom. And Apollonius said well, It was for slaves to lie, and for free-men

to speak the truth. If you be freed by the blood of the Son of God, then you are free indeed: and then consider how dishonourable it is to lie, to the SER M. displeasure of God, and only to please your fellow servant. The difference here is so great, that it might be sufficient only to consider the antithesis. Did the man make you what you are? Did he pay his blood for you, to save you from death? Does he keep you from sickness? True: You eat at his table; but they are of God's provisions that he and you feed of. Can your Master free you from a feaver, when you have drunk your self into it? and restore your innocence; when you have forsworn your self for his interest? Is the change reasonable? He gives you meat and drink, for which you do him service: But is not he a Tyrant, and an usurper, an oppressor, and an extortioner, if he will force thee to give thy Soul for him, to fell thy Soul for old shoes and broken-bread? But when thou art to make thy accounts of Eternity, will it be taken for an answer, My Patron or my Governour, my Prince or my Master, forced me to it? or if it will not, will he undertake a portion of thy flames? or, if that may not be, will it be in the midst of all thy torments any ease to thy forrows to remember all the rewards and clothes, all the money and civilities, all the chearful looks and familiarity and fellowship of vices which in your life time made your spirit so gay and easie? It will in the eternal loads of forrow add a duplicate of groans and indignation, when it shall be remembred for how base and trifling an interest, and upon what weak principles, we fell fick and died eternally.

2. The next advice to persons thus tempted is, that they would learn to separate duty from mistaken interest, and let them be both served in their just proportions, when we have learned to make a difference. A Wife is bound to her Husband in all his just designs, and in all noble usages and Christian comportments: But a Wife is no more bound to pursue her Husband's vicious hatreds, than to serve and promote his unlawful and wandering loves. It is not alwaies a part of duty to think the same propositions, or to curse the same persons, or to wish him success in unjust designs: And yet the sadness of it is, that a good woman is easily tempted to believe the cause to be just; and when her affection hath forced her judgment, her judgment for ever after shall carry the affection to all its erring and abused determinations. A friend is turned a flatterer, if he does not know that the limits of friendship extend no farther than the pale and inclosures of Reason and Religion. No Master puts it into his covenant that his fervant shall be drunk with him, or give in evidence in his Master's cause according to his Master's scrolls : and therefore it is befides and against the duty of a servant to fin by that authority; it is as if he should set Mules to keep his sheep, or make his Dogs to carry burthens, it is belides their nature and delign. And if any person falls under so tyrannical Relation, let him consider how hard a Master he serves, where the Devil gives the imployment, and shame is his entertainment, and fin is his work, and Hell is his wages. Take therefore the counfel of the fon of Sirac ; Accept no person against the soul, and let not the reverence Ecclus 4.23; of any man cause thee to fall.

3. When Passion mingles with Duty, and is a necessary instrument of serving God, let not Passion run its own course, and pass on to liberty, and thence to license and dissolution; but ler no more of it be entertained than will just do the work. For no zeal of duty will warrant a violent Passion to prevaricate a duty. I have seen some Officers of War, in passion and zeal of their duty have made no scruple to command a soldier with a dialect of curfing and accents of swearing, and pretended

SERM. XVI. they could not else speak words effective enough, and of sufficient authority: and a man may be easily overtaken in the issues of his government, while his authority serves it self with passion; if he be not curious in his measures, his passion also will serve it self upon the Authority, and over-rule the Ruler.

4. Let every fuch tempted person remember, that all evil comes from our selves, and not from others; and therefore all pretences and prejudices, all commands and temptations, all opinions and necessities are but instances of our weakness, and arguments of our folly: For, unless we lifted, no man can make us drink beyond our measures; and if I tell a lie for my Master's or my friend's advantage, it is because I prefer a little end of money or flattery before my honour and my innocence. They are huge follies which go up and down in the mouths and heads of men. [He that knows not how to dissemble knows not how to reign:] He that will not do as his company does, must go out of the world, and quit all society of men. We create necessities of our own, and then think we have reason to serve their importunity. Non ego sum ambitiosus, sed nemo aliter Rome potest vivere; non ego sumptuosus, sed Orbs ipsa magnas impensas exigit. Non est meum vitium quod iracundus sum, quod nondum constitui certum vitæ genus; adolescentia hæc facit. The place we live in makes us expensive the state of life I have chosen renders me ambitious, my age makes me angry or lustful, proud or peevish. These are nothing else but resolutions never to mend as long as we can have excuses for our follies, and untill we can cozen our selves no more. There is no such thing as a necessity for a Prince to dissemble, or for a servant to lie, or for a friend to flatter, for a civil person and a sociable to be drunk: we cozen our selves with thinking the fault is so much derivative from others, till the smart and the shame falls upon ourselves, and covers our heads with forrow. And unless this gap be stopped, and that we build our duty upon our own bottoms, as supported with the grace of God, there is no Vice but may find a Patron; and no age, or relation, or state of life but will be an engagement to fin; and we shall think it necessary to be lustful in our youth, and revengeful in our manhood, and covetous in our old age: and we shall perceive that every state of men, and every trade and profession, lives upon the vices of others, or upon their miseries; and therefore they will think it necessary to promote, or to wish it. If men were temperate, Phylicians would be poor and unless some Princes were ambitious, or others injurious, there would be no employment for fouldiers. The Vintner's retail supports the Merchant's trade, and it is a vice that supports the Vintner's retail: and if all men were wise and sober perfons, we should have sewer beggars, and sewer rich. And if our Law-givers should imitate Demader of Athens, who condemned a man that lived by felling things belonging to funerals, as supposing he could not chuse but wish the death of men, by whose dying he got his living; we should and most men accounted eriminals, because Vice is so involved in the attairs of the world; that it is made the support of many trades, and the business of great multitudes of men. Certainly from hence it is that iniquity does to much abound : And unless we state our Questions right, and pergeive the evilto be deligned only from our felves, and that no fuch pretence shall keep off the punishment or the shame from our felves, we shall fall into a state which is only capable of compassion, because it is irrecoverable: and then we shall be infinitely miserable, when we can only receive an useless and ineffective pity. Whatsoever is necessary cannot be avoided: He therefore that shall fay he cannot avoid his sin, is out of

the mercies of this Text they who are appointed Guides and Phylicians of Souls cannot to any purpose do their offices of pity. It is necessary SERM. that we serve God, and do our duty, and secure the interest of our Souls, and be as careful to preserve our relations to God, as to our friend or Prince. But if it can be necessary for any man in any condition to sin, it is also necessary for that man to perish.



SERMON XVII.

PART II.

He last fort of them that sin, and yet are to be treated with compassion, is of them that interrupt the course of an honest life with single acts of sin, stepping aside and starting like a broken bow: whose resolution stands fair, and their hearts are towards God and they sojourn in Religion, or rather dwell there; but that like evil husbands they go abroad, and enter into places of dishonour and un-Such as these all stories remember with a sad character: and every narrative concerning David which would end in honour and fair report, is fullied with the remembrances of Bathsheba; and the Holy Ghost hath called him a man after Gods own heart, save in the matter of Vriah: there indeed he was a man after his own heart ; even then when his Reason was stolen from him by passion, and his Religion was fullied by the beauties of a fair woman. I wish we lived in an age in which the people were to be treated with concerning renouncing the fingle actions of fin, and the feldom interruptions of Piety. Men are taught to fay that every man fins in every action he does; and this is one of the Doctrines for the believing of which he shall be accounted a good man: and upon this ground it is easie for men to allow themselves some sins, when in all cases and in every action it is unavoidable. I shall fay nothing of the Question, save that the Scriptures reckon otherwife; * and in the accounts of David's life reckon but one great fin, * and in Zachary and Elizabeth give a testimony of an unblameable conversation; *and Hezekiah did not make his confession when he prayed to God in his sickness, and said, he had walked uprightly before God; * and therefore St. Paul, after his Conversion, designed and laboured hard, and therefore certainly with hopes to accomplish it, that he might keep his conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards man; *and one of Christ's great purposes is, to present his whole Church pure and spotlesto the throne of grace; and * Saint John the Baptist offended none but Herod; * and no pious Christian brought a bill of accusation against the Holy Virgin Mother. *Certain it is, that God hath given us precepts of fuch a Holiness and such a Purity, such a Meekness and such Humility, as hath



no pattern but Christ, no president but the purities of God: and there-SERM. fore it is intended we should live with a life whose actions are not chequer'd with white and black, half Sin and half Vertue. God's sheep are not like Jacob's flock streaked and spotted; it is an intire Holiness that God requires, and will not endure to have a holy course interrupted by the dishonour of a base and ignoble action. I do not mean that a mans life can be as pure as the Sun, or the rayes of Celestial Jernsalem; but like the Moon, in which there are spots, but they are no deformity; a lessening only and an abatement of light, no cloud to hinder and draw a veil before its face, but sometimes it is not so serene and bright as at other times. Every man hath his indifcretions and infirmities, his arrests and sudden incursions, his neighbourhoods and semblances of fin, his little violences to Reason, and peevish melancholy, and humorous phantastick discourses; unaptness to a devout prayer, his fondness to judge favourably in his own cases, little deceptions, and voluntary and involuntary cousenages, ignorances and inadvertences, careless hours and unwatchful seasons. But no good man ever commits one act of Adultery; no godly man will at any time be drunk; or if he be, he ceases to be a godly man, and is run into the confines of death, and is fick at heart, and may die of the sickness, die eternally. This happens more frequently in persons of an infant-Piety, when the Vertue is not corroborated by a long abode, and a confirmed resolution, and an usual victory, and a triumphant grace: and the longer we are accustomed to Piety, the more infrequent will be the little breaches of folly, and a returning to fin. But as the needle of a compais, when it is directed to its beloved Star, at the first addresses waves on either side, and seems indifferent in his courtship of the rising or declining Sun, and when it seems first determined to the North, stands a while trembling, as if it suffered inconvenience in the first fruition of its desires, and stands not still in full injoyment till after first a great variety of motion, and then an undisturbed posture: So is the Piety, and so is the conversion of a man, wrought by degrees and several steps of imperfection: and at first our choices are wavering, convinced by the grace of God, and yet not perswaded; and then perswaded, but not resolved; and then resolved, but deferring to begin; and then beginning, but (as all beginnings are) in weakness and uncertainty; and we sie out often into huge indiscretions and look back to Sodom, and long to return to Egypt: and when the storm is quite over, we find little bublings and uneavennesses upon the face of the waters, we often weaken our own purposes by the returns of sin; and we do not call our felves conquerours, till by the long possession of Vertues it is a strange and unusual, and therefore an uneasse and unpleasant thing, to act a crime. When Polemon of Athens by chance coming into the Schools of Xenocrates was reformed upon the hearing of that one Lecture, some wise men gave this censure of him; Peregrinatus est bujus animus in nequitia, non habitavit, His mind wandred in wickedness, and travelled in it, but never dwelt there. The same is the case of some men; they make inrodes into the enemies country, not like enemies to spoil, but like Dinab, to be satisfied with the stranger beauties of the land, till their Vertues are defloured, and they enter into tragedies, and are possessed by death and intolerable forrows. But because this is like the fate of Jacob's daughter, and happens not by delign, but folly, not by malice, but surprise, not by the strength of will, but by the weakness of Grace, and yet carries a man to the same place

place whither a great Vice usually does; it is hugely pitiable, and the persons are to be treated with compassion, and to be assisted by the fol- SER M.

lowing confiderations and exercises.

First let us consider, that for a good man to be overtaken in a single XVII. crime is the greatest dishonour and unthristiness in the whole world. As a fly in a box of ointment, so is a little folly to him that is accounted wise, said the son of sirac. No man chides a fool for his weaknesses, or scorns a Child for playing with flies, and preferring the present appetite before all the possibilities of to morrow's event: But men wondred when they faw Socrates ride upon a Cane; and when solomon laid his Wildomat the foot of Pharaoh's daughter, and changed his glory for the interest of wanton fleep, he became the discourse of heaven and earth: and men think themselves abused, and their expectation cozened, when they see a wise man do the actions of a fool, and a good man seized upon by the dishonours of a crime. But the loss of his reputation is the least of his evil. It is the greatest improvidence in the world to let a healthful Constitution be destroyed in the surfeit of one night. For although when a man by the grace of God and a long endeavour hath obtained the habit of Christian Graces, every single sin does not spoil the habit of Vertue, because that cannot be lost but as it was gotten, that is, by parts and fuccession; yet every crime interrupts the acceptation of the Grace, and makes the man to enter into the state of enmity and displeasure with God. The habit is only lessened naturally, but the value of it is wholly taken away. And in this sence is that of fosephus, to 20 6 thi whe ois is me- a. Chap. 14. ράλοις Δομομείν Ισοδύναμον εξη, which Saint James well renders, He that keeps the whole Law and offends in one point, is guilty of all; that is, If he prevaricates in any Commandment, the transgression of which by the Law was capital, he shall as certainly die as if he broke the whole Law. And the same is the case of those single actions which the School calls deadly sins, that is, actions of choice in any sin that hath a name; and makes a kind, and hath a distinct matter. And sins once pardoned return again to all the purposes of mischief, if we by a new sin forfeit God's former loving-kindness. When the righteom man turneth from his righte- Ezek. 18.24. ou nes, and committeth iniquity, all his righteou ness that he hath done shall not be remembred: in the the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in themshall he die. Now then consider how great a fool he is, who, when he hath with much labour and by suffering violence contradicted his first desires; when his spirit hath been in an agony and care, and with much uneafiness hath denied to please the lower man; when with many prayers, and groans, and innumerable fighs, and strong cryings to God, with sharp sufferances and a long severity, he hath obtained of God to begin his pardon and restitution, and that he is in some hopes to return to God's favour, and that he shall become an heir of Heaven; when some of his amazing fears and distracting cares begin to be taken off; when he begins to think that now it is not certain he shall perish in a sad eternity, but he hopes to be saved, and he considers how excellent a condition that is; he hopes when be dies to go to God, and that he shall never enter into the possession of Devils; and this state, which is but the twilight of a glorious felicity, he hath obtained with great labour, and much care, and infinite danger: that this man should throw all this structure down, and then when he is ready to reap the fruits of his labours, by one indifcreet action to fet fire upon his cornfields, and destroy all his dear-earned hopes, for the madness and loose wanderings of an hour: This man is an indifferent gamester, who doubles

his stake as he thrives, and at one throw is dispossessed of all the prospe-SER M. -rities of a luckie hand.

They that are poor (as Plutarch observes) are careless of little things, XVII. because by saving them they think no great moments can accrue to their estates, and they despairing to be rich think such frugality impertment: But they that feel their banks swell, and are within the possibilities of wealth, think it useful if they referve the smaller minutes of expence, knowing that every thing will add to their heap. But then, after long sparing in one night to throw away the wealth of a long purchase, is an imprudence becoming none but fuch persons who are to be kept under Tutors and Guardians, and such as are to be chastised by their servants, and to be punished by them whom they cloath and feed.

Hom. Il.B.

- aMà zì Eumns Αίσχε όν τι διρόν τε μένειν, κενεόν τε νέεωσαι.

These men sow much and gather little; stay long, and return empty; and after a long voiage they are dashed in pieces when their vessels are laden with the spoils of Provinces. Every deadly sin destroys the rewards of a seven-years Piety. I add to this that God is more impatient at a sin committed by his servants, than at many by persons that are his enemies; and an uncivil answer from a son to a Father, from an obliged person to a benefactor, is a greater undecency, than if an enemy should storm his house, or revile him to his head. Angustus Casar taxed all the world, and God took no publick notices of it; but when David taxed and numbred a petty Province, it was not to be expiated without a Plague: because fuch persons, besides the direct sin, add the circumstance of Ingratitude to God who hath redeemed them from their vain conversation, and from death, and from Hell, and configued them to the inheritance of sons, and given them his Grace and his Spirit, and many periods of comfort, and a certain hope, and visible earnests of immortality. Nothing is baser than that such a person against his reason, against his interest, against his God, against so many obligations, against his custom, against his very habits and acquired inclinations, should do an action

Quam nisi seductis nequeas committere Divis,

which a man must for ever be ashamed of, and like Adam, must run from God himself to do it, and depart from the state in which he had placed all his hopes, and to which he had defigned all his labours. The confideration is effective enough, if we furn up the particulars; for he that hath lived well, and then falls into a deliberate fin, is infinitely dishonoured, is most imprudent, most unsafe, and most unthankful.

2. Let persons tempted to the single instances of fin in the midst of a laudable life, be very careful that they suffer not themselves to be drawn aside by the eminency of great Examples. For some think Drunkenness hath a little honesty derived unto it by the example of Noah; and Adultery is not so scandalous and intolerably distinuourable, fince Bathsheba bathed, and David was defiled; and men think a flight is no cowardice, if a General turns his head and runs.

Pompeio fugiente timent.

Well might all the gowned Romans fear, when Pompey fled. And who is there that can hope to be more righteous than David, or stronger than Sampson,

Sampson, or have less Hypocrisie than Saint Peter, or be more temperate than Noah? These great Examples bear men of weak discourses and SERM. weaker resolutions from the severity of Vertues. But, as Diagoras, to XVII. them that shewed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped Shipwrack upon their prayers and vows to Neptune, answered, that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed and yet were drowned: So do these men keep catalogues of those few persons who broke the thred of a fair life in funder with the violence of a great crime, and by the grace of God recovered, and repented, and lived; but they confider not concerning those infinite numbers of men who died in their first fit of fickness, who after a fair voiage have thrown themselves overboard, and perished in a sudden wildness. One said well, Si quid Socrates ant Aristippus contra morem & consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur quis lice-re: Magnis enim illi & divinis bonis banc licentiam assequebantur. If Socrates did any unusual thing, it is not for thee, who art of an ordinary Vertue, to assume the same licence: for he by a divine and excellent life hath obtained leave or pardon respectively for what thou must never hope for, till thou hast arrived at the same glories. First, be as devout as David, as good a Christian as Saint Peter; and then thou wilt not dare with defign to act that which they fell into by surprize : and if thou dost fall as they did, by that time thou hast also repented like them, it may be faid concerning thee, that thou didft fall and break thy bones, but God did heal thee and pardon thee. Remember that all the damned fouls shall bear an eternity of torments for the pleasures of a short sinfulness; but for a fingle transient action to die for ever is an intolerable exchange, and the effect of so great a folly, that whosoever falls into it and then considers it, it will make him mad and distracted for ever.

3. Remember, that fince no man can please God, or be partakers of any promises, or : ap the reward of any actions in the returns of Eternity, unless he performs to God an entire duty, according to the capacities of a man so taught, and so tempted, and so assisted; such a person must be curious that he be not cozened with the duties and performancees of any one relation. 1. Some there are that think all our religion confifts in Prayers and publick or private offices of Devotion, and not in moral actions or entercourses of Justice and Temperance, of Kindness and Friendships, of Sincerity and Liberality, of Chastity and Humility, of Repentance and Obedience. Indeed no humour is so easie to be counterfeited as Devotion; and yet no Hypocrifie is more common among men nor any so useless as to God: for it being an address to him alone who knows the heart and all the fecret purpofes, it can do no fervice in order to Heaven, so long as it is without the power of Godlines, and the energy and vivacity of a holy life. God will not fuffer us to commute a duty, because all is his due; and Religion shall not pay for want of Temperance. If the devoutest Hermit be proud; or he that fasts thrice in the week be uncharitable once; or he that gives much to the poor, gives also too much liberty to himself; he hath planted a fair garden, and invited a wild boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit-trees, and his guest being something rude hath disordered his paradife, and made it become a wilderness. 2. Others there are, that judge themselves by the censures that Kings and Princes give concerning them, or as they are spoken of by their betters; and so make falle judgments concerning their condition. For, our Betters, to whom we shew our best parts, to whom we speak with caution and consider what we represent, they see our arts and our dreffings, but nothing of our nature and deformities: Trust not their



censures concerning thee, but to thy own opinion of thy self whom thou knowest in thy retirements, and natural peevishness, and unhandsom inclinations, and secret baseness. 3. Some men have been admired abroad, in whom the wife and the fervant never faw any thing excellent: A rare V Judge and a good Common-wealths man in the streets and publick meetings, and a just man to his neighbour, and charitable to the poor; for in all these places the man is observed, and kept in awe by the Sun, by light and by voices: but this man is a Tyrant at home, an unkind Husband, an ill Father, an imperious Master. And such men are like Prophets in their own countreys, not honoured at home, and can never be honoured by God, who will not endure that many Vertues should excuse a few Vices, or that any of his servants shall take pensions of the Devil, and in the profession of his service do his enemy single advantages.

4. He that hath past many stages of a good life, to prevent his being tempted to a fingle fin, must be very careful that he never entertain his spirit with the remembrances of his past sin, nor amuse it with the phantastick apprehensions of the present. When the Israelites fancied the sapidness and relish of the flesh-pots, they longed to taste and to return.

* So when a Lybian Tiger drawn from his wilder forragings is shut up and taught to eat civil meat, and fuffer the authority of a man, he fits Munsurere down tamely in his prison, and pays to his keeper fear and reverence for fera. & vulture his meat: But if he chance to come again, and taste a draught of warm possession has blood he presently leave into the authority of a man, he lits blood, he presently leaps into his natural cruelty.

*Sic ubi diffueta fylvis in carcere claufa

Atque homi-nem didicere pati; fi torrida

rabié sque furorque,

Admonitaque tument gustato sanguine fauces; Fervet, & a trepido vix abstinet ira Magistro,

Venit in ora He scarce abstains from eating those hands that brought him discipline and food. So is the nature of a man made tame and gentle by the Grace of God, and reduced to Reason, and kept in awe by Religion and Laws, and by an awful Vertue is taught to forget those alluring and sottish relishes of sin: but if he diverts from his path, and snatches handfuls from the wanton vineyards, and remembers the lasciviousness of his unwhol-fom food that pleased his childish palate: then he grows sick again, and hungry after unwholfom diet, and longs for the Apples of sodom. A man must walk through the world without eyes or ears, famile or appetite, but fuch as are created and fanctified by the grace of God; and being once made a new man, he must serve all the needs of Nature by the appetites and faculties of Grace; Nature must be wholly a servant: and we must so look towards the deliciousness of our Religion and the ravishments of Heaven, that our memory must be for ever useless to the affairs and perceptions of fin. We cannot stand, we cannot live, unless we be curious and watchful in this particular.

By these and all other arts of the Spirit, if we stand upon our guard, never indulging to our selves one sin because it is but one, as knowing that one fin brought in death upon all the world, and one fin brought flavery upon the posterity of Cham; and always fearing lest death surprize us in that one fin; we shall by the grace of God either not need, or else easily perceive the effects and bleffings of that compassion which God reserves in the secrets of his mercy, for such persons whom his Grace hath ordained and disposed with excellent dispositions unto life eternal.

These are the sorts of men which are to be used with compassion, concerning whom we are to make a difference, making a difference] so says the Text. And it is of high concernment that we should do so, that we may relieve the infirmities of the men, and relieve their ficknesses, and

transcribe

transcribe the copy of the Divine mercy, who loves not to quench the Smoaking flax, nor break the bruised reed. For although all fins are against SER M. God's Commandments directly, or by certain consequents, by line, or by XVII. analogie; yet they are not all of the same tincture and mortality.

Nec vincit ratio, tantundem ut peccet idémque, Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti, Ut qui nocturnus Divum sacra legerit-

He that robs a garden of Coleworts, and carries away an armful of Spinage, does not deferve Hell, as he that steals the Chalice from the Church, or betrays a Prince; and therefore men are distinguished accordingly.

Est inter Tanaim quiddam socerumque Viselli.

The Poet that Sejanus condemned for dishonouring the memory of Agamemnon, was not an equal criminal with Catiline or Gracchus : and Simon Magus and the Nicolaitans committed crimes which God hated more than the Complying of S. Barnabas, or the diffimulation of S. Peter ; and therefore God does treat these persons severally. Some of these are restrained with a fit of sickness, some with a great loss, and in these there are degrees; and some arrive at death. And in this manner God scourged the Corinthians, for their irreverent and disorderly receiving the Holy Sacrament. For although even the least of the sins that I have discoursed of will lead to death eternal, if their course be not interrupted, and the disorder chastised; yet because we do not stop their progress instantly, God many times does, and vifits us with proportionable Judgments; and fo not only checks the rivulet from swelling into rivers and a vastness, but plainly tells us, that although smaller crimes shall not be punished with equal severity as the greatest, yet even in Hell there are eternal Rods as well as eternal Scorpions; and the smallest crime that we act with an infant-malice, and manly deliberation, shall be revenged with the leffer strokes of wrath, but yet with the infliction of a fad Eternity. But then that we also should make a difference, is a precept concerning Church-discipline, and therefore not here proper to be considered, but only as it may concern our own particulars in the actions of Repentance, and our brethren in fraternal Correction.

> Regula que pænas peccatis irrroget equas, Nec scuticà dignum horribili settere flagello.

Let us be fure that we neglect no fin, but repent for every one, and judge our selves for every one, according to the proportion of the malice, or the scandal, or the danger. And although in this there is no fear that we would be excellive; yet when we are to reprove a Brother we are sharp enough, and either by pride or by animolity, by the itch of government or the indignation of an angry mind, we run beyond the gentleness of a Christian monitor. We must remember that by Christ's Law some are to be admonished privately, some to be shamed and corrected publickly; and, beyond these, there is an Abscission, or a Cutting off from the Communion of faithful people, a delivering over to Satan. And to this purpose is that old reading of the words of my Text, which is still in some Copies, it is play exercise diame evolutes, Reprove them sharply, when they are convinced, or separate by sentence. But because this also is a design of Mercy acted with an instance of discipline, it is a punishment of the

SERM XVII.

flesh, that the Soul may be faved in the day of the Lord; it means the same ERM. with the usual reading, and with the last words of the Text, and teaches us our usage towards the worst of recoverable sinners.

II. Others fave with fear, pulling them out of the fire. \ Some fins there are which in their own nature are damnable, and some are such as will certainly bring a man to damnation: the first are curable, but with much danger; the second are desperate and irrecoverable. When a man is violently tempted and allured with an object that is proportionable and pleasant to his vigorous appetite, and his unabated, unmortified nature, this man falls into death; but yet we pitie him, as we pitie a thief that robs for his necessity: this man did not tempt himself, but his spirit suffers violence, and his reason is invaded, and his infirmities are mighty, and his aids not yet prevailing. But when this single temptation hath prevailed for a single instance, and leaves a relish upon the palate, and this produces another, and that also is fruitful and swells into a Family and kindred of fin, that is, it grows first into approbation, then to a clear assent, and an untroubled conscience, thence into frequencie, from thence unto a custom, and easiness, and a habit 5 this man is fallen into the fire. There are also some single acts of so great a Malice, that they must suppose a man habitually sinful before he could arrive at that height of wickedness. No man begins his finful course with killing of his Father or his Prince: and Simon Mague had preambulatory impieties; he was covetous and ambitious long before he offered to buy the Holy Ghost. Nemo -And although fuch actions may have in them repente fuit turpissimusthe malice and the mischief, the disorder and the wrong, the principle and the permanent effect of a habit and a long course of sin; yet because they never or very feldom go alone, but after the predisposition of other ushering crimes, we shall not amis comprise them under the name of habitual fins: for such they are either formally or equivalently. And if any man hath fallen into a finful habit, into a course and order of sinning, his case is little less than desperate; but that little hope that is remanent hath its degree, according to the infancie or the growth of the habit.

1. For all fins less than habitual, it is certain a Pardon is ready to penitent persons; that is, to all that sin in ignorance or in infirmity, by furprize or inadvertency, in smaller instances or infrequent returns, with involuntary actions or imperfect resolutions. εξετείνατε τὰς χείρας υμάν πρός τ αὐτοκράτορα Θεον, ίκει δύντης αὐτὸν ίλεων γενέωθαι, ε τι άκοντες κμάξιειε, faid Clemens in his Epistle: Lift up your hands to Almighty God, and pray him to be merciful to you in all things when you sin unwillingly; that is, in which you fin with an imperfect choice. For no man fins against his will directly, but when his understanding is abused by an inevitable or an intolerable weakness, or their wills follow their blind guide and are not the perfect mistresses of their own actions; and therefore leave a way and easiness to repent, and be ashamed of them, and therefore a possibility and readiness for pardon. And these are the sins that we are taught to pray to God that he would pardon, as he gives us our bread, that is, every day. For in many things we offend all, said Saint James, that is, in many smaller matters, in matters of surprize or inevitable infirmity. And therefore Posidonius said, that Saint Austin was used to say, That he would not have even good and holy Priests go from this world without the Susception of equal and worthy penances: and the most innocent life in our account is not a competent instrument of a peremptory confidence, and of justifying our selves. I am guilty of nothing, (said Saint Paul) that is, of no ill intent, or negligence in preaching the Gospel; yet I am not hereby

justified,

justified, for God it may be knows many little irregularities and infinuations of fin. In this case we are to make a difference; but humility, and SERM. prayer, and watchfulness, are the direct instruments of the expiation of fuch fins.

But then, fecondly, who foever fins without these abating-circumstances, that is, in great Instances, in which a mans understanding cannot be cozened, as in Drunkenness, Murther, Adultery, and in the frequent repetitions of any fort of fin whatfoever, in which a mans choice cannot be surprized, and in which it is certain there is a love of the sin, and a delight in it, and a power over a mans resolutions; in these cases it is a miraculous grace, and an extraordinary change, that must turn the current and the stream of the iniquity; and when it is begun, the pardon is more uncertain, and the Repentance more difficult, and the effect much abated, and the man must be made miserable that he may not be accurfed for ever.

1. I say, his Pardon is uncertain; because there are some sins wich are unpardonable, (as I shall shew) and they are not all named in particular; and the degrees of malice being uncertain, the Salvation of that man is to be wrought with infinite fear and trembling. It was the case of simon Magus, Repent and ask pardon for thy fin, if peradventure the thought Act 8.22. of thy heart may be forgiven thee. [If peradventure 5] it was a new crime, and concerning its possibility of pardon no revelation had been made, and by analogy to other crimes it was very like an unpardonable fin: for it was a thinking a thought against the HolyGhost, and that was next to speaking a word against him. Cain's sin was of the same nature; It is greater than it can be forgiven : his passion and his fear was too severe and decretory; it was pardonable, but truly we never find that God did pardon it.

2. But besides this, it is uncertain in the pardon, because it may be the time of pardon is passed; and though God hath pardoned to other people the same sins, and to thee too sometimes before, yet it may be he will not now: he hath not promifed pardon so often as we sin, and in all the returns of impudence, apoltalie, and ingratitude; and it may be thy day is past, as was Jerusalem's in the day that they crucified the Saviour of the world.

3. Pardon of fuch habitual fins is uncertain, because life is uncertain; and fuch fins require much time for their abolition and expiation. And therefore although these sins are not necessario martifera, that is, unpardonable, yet by consequence they become deadly 3 because our life may be cut off before we have finished or performed those necessary parts of Repentance, which are the fevere, and yet the only condition of getting pardon. So that you may perceive, that not only every great single crime, but the habit of any sin is dangerous: and therefore these persons are to be Inatched from the fire, if you mean to refcue them: on The Trees acting offs. If you ftay a day, it may be you ftay too long.

4. To which I add this fourth confideration, that every delay of return is in the case of habitual sins an approach to Desperation, because the nature of Habits is like that of Crocodiles, ithey grow as long as they live ; and if they come to obstinacy or confirmation, they are in Hell already, and can never return back. For fo the Pannonian Bears, when they have clasped a dart in the region of their Liver, wheel themselves upon the wound, and with anger and malicious revenge strike the deadly barb deeper, and cannot be quit from that fatal steel, but in flying bear along that which themselves make the instrument of a more batty death: So is every vicious person struck with a deadly wound, and his own hands sorce



it into the entertainments of the heart; and because it is painful to draw it forth by a sharp and salutary Repentance, he still rouls and turns upon VII. his wound and carries his death in his bowels, where it first entered by choice, and then dwelt by love, and at last shall finish the tragedy by divine judgments and an unalterable decree.

> But as the pardon of these sins is uncertain, so the conditions of Restitution are hard even to them who shall be pardoned: their pardon and themselves too must be setched from the fire, water will not do it ; tears and ineffective forrow cannot take off a habit, or a great crime.

> > O nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cadis Tolli fluminea posse putatis aqua!

Chap. 4. 1,3.

Chap.s.ver.

Bion seeing a Prince weep and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked if Baldness would cure his grief. Such pompous sorrows may be good indices but no perfect instruments of Restitution. S. James plainly declares the possibilities of pardon to great sins, in the cases of Contention, Adultery, Lust and Envy, which are the four great indecencies that are most contrary to Christianity: and in the 5. Chap. he implies also a possibility of pardon to an habitual finner, whom he calls τ πλανηθέν α από το όδε τ άληθείας, one that errs from the truth, that is, from the life of a Christian, the life of the Spirit of truth: and he adds, that fuch a person may be reduced, and so be pardoned, though he have sinned long; he that converts such a one shall hide a multitude of sins. But then the way that he appoints for the Restitution of such persons is Humility and Humiliation, Fenances and sharp penitential sorrows, and Afflictions, resisting the Devil, returning to God, weeping and mourning, Confessions and Prayers, as you may read at large in the 4. and 5. Chapters, and there it is that you shall find it a duty, that fuch persons should be afflicted, and should confest to their brethren : and these are harder conditions than God requires in the former cases 3 these are a kind of fiery trial.

I have now done with my Text, and should add no more, but that the nature of these fins is such, that they may increase in their weight, and duration, and malice, and then they increase in mischief and fatality, and so go beyond the Text. Cicero said well, Ipsa consuetudo assentiendi pericu-losa esse videtur & lubrica, L.4. Acad. Qu. The very custom of consenting in the matters of civility is dangerous and slippery, and will quickly engage us in error; and then we think we are bound to defend them; or else we are made flatterers by it, and so become vicious: and we love our own Vices that we are used to, and keep them till they are incurable, that is, till we will never repent of them: and some men resolve never to repent, that is, they resolve they will not be saved, they tread under foot the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Those persons are in the fire too, but they will not be pulled out: concerning whom God's Prophets must say as once concerning Babylon, Curavimus, on non est sanata; derelinquamus eam: We would have healed them, but they would not be healed; let us leave them in their fins, and they shall have enough of it. Only this: Those that put themselves out of the condition of mercy are not to be endured in Christian societies; they deserve it not, and it is not safe that they should be fuffered.

But besides all this, I shall name one thing more unto you; for

nunquam aded fædis, adeoque pudendis Utimur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint.

There are some single actions of fin of so great a Malice, that in their

own nature they are beyond the limit of Gospel pardon: they are not such things for the pardon of which God entred into covenant, because they SERM' are such fins which put a man into perfect indispositions, and incapacities of entring into or being in the covenant. In the first Ages of the world. Atheism was of that nature, it was against their whole Religion; and the fin is worse now, against the whole Religion still, and against a brighter light. In the Ages after the Flood, Idolatry was also just such another : for God was known first only as the Creator; then he began to manifest himfelf in special contracts with men, and he quickly was declared the God of Israel; and Idolatry perfectly destroyed all that Religion, and therefore was never pardoned intirely, but God did visit it upon them that finned; and when he pardoned it in some degrees, yet he also punished it in some : and yet rebellion against the supreme power of Moses and Aaron was worse; for that also was a perfect destruction of the whole Religion, because it refused to submit to those hands upon which God had placed all the Religion and all the Government. And now if we would know in the Gospel what answers these precedent sins ; I answer, first the same sins acted by a resolute hand and heart are worse now than ever they were : and a third or fourth is also to be added ; and that is Apostasie, or a voluntary malicious renouncing the Faith: The Church hath often declared that fin to be unpardonable. Witchcraft, or final Impenitence and Obstinacy in any fin, are infallibly desperate; and in general, and by a certain parity of reason, whatsoever does destroy Charity or the good life of a Christian with the same general venom and deletery as Apostasse destroys Faith and he that is a Renegado from Charity is as unpardonable as he that returns to solemn Atheism or Infidelity; for all that, is directly the fin against the Holy Ghost, that is, a throwing that away whereby only we can be Christians, whereby only we can hope to be saved. To speak a word against the Holy Ghost in the Pharisees was declared unpardonable, because it was fuch a word which, if it had been true or believed, would have destroyed the whole Religion; for they said that Christ wrought by Beelzebub, and by consequence did not come from God. He that destroys all the whole Order of Priesthood, destroys one of the greatest parts of the Religion, and one of the greatest effects of the Holy Ghost: He that destroys Government destroys another part. But that we may come nearer to our selves: To quench the Spirit of God is worse than to speak some words against him; to grieve the Spirit of God is a part of the same impiety; to refift the Holy Ghost is another part: and if we consider that every great sin does this in proportion, it would concern us to be careful lest we fall into presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over us. Out of this that I have spoken you may easily gather what fort of men those are who cannot be snatched from the fire; for whom, as S. John says, we are not to pray; and how near men come to it that continue in any known fin. If I should descend to particulars, I might lay a snare to scrupulous and nice consci-This only; Every confirmed habitual finner does manifest the divine justice in punishing the sins of a short life with a never-dying worm and a never-quenched flame; because he hath an affection to fin, that no time will diminish, but such as would increase to eternal ages; and accordingly as any man hath a degree of love, so he hath lodged in his Soul a spark which, unless it be speedily and effectively quenched, will break forth into unquenchable fire.



Sermon XVIII.

THE

FOOLISH EXCHANGE.

Matth. 16. Verse 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose bis own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?



Hen the eternal Mercy of God had decreed to rescue mankind from misery and infelicity, and so triumphed over his own Justice; the excellent Wisdom of God resolved to do it in ways contradictory to the appetites and de-figns of man, that it also might triumph over our weak-nesses and impersect conceptions. So God decreed to glorisie his mercy by curing our sins, and to exalt his wisdom by the re-

proof of our ignorance, and the representing upon what weak and false Principles we had built our hopes and expectations of felicity; Pleasures and Profit, Victory over our enemies, Riches and pompous Honours, Power and revenge, defires according to fenfual Appetites, and profecutions violent and passionate of those Appetites, Health and long life, free from trouble, without poverty or persecution.

Hac funt, jucundissime Martialis, Vitam que facient beatiorem.

These are the measures of good and evil, the object of our hopes and fears, the securing our content, and the portion of this world; and for the other, let it be as it may. But the Blessed Jesus having made revelations of an immortal duration of another world, and of a strange restitution to it, even by the Resurrection of the Body, and a new investiture of the Soul with the same upper garment, clarified and made pure, so as no Fuller on earth can whiten it ; hath also preached a new Philosophy, hath cancelled all the old Principles, reduced the appetites of Sense to the discourses of Reason, and heightned Reason to the sublimities of the Spirit, teaching us abstractions and immaterial conceptions, giving us new eyes, and new objects, and new proportions: For now fenfual Pleasures are not delightful, Riches are dross, Honours are nothing but the appendages of Vertue, and in relation to it are to receive their account. But now if you would enjoy life, you must die; if you would be at ease, you must take up Christ's Cross, and conform to his sufferings, if you would fave your life, you must lose it; and if you would be rich, you must abound in good works, you must be poor in spirit, and despise the world, and be rich unto God: for whatsoever is contrary to the purchases and affections of this world is an endearment of our hopes in the world

to come. And therefore he having stated the question so, that either we must quit this world or the other; our affections, I mean, and adheren- SER M. cies to this, or our interest and hopes of the other: the choice is rendered very easie by the words of my Text, because the distance is not less than XVIII infinite, and the comparison hath terms of a vast difference, Heaven and Hell, Eternity and a Moment, Vanity and real Felicity, Life and Death eternal, all that can be hoped for and all that can be feared; these are the terms of our choice: and if a man have his wits about him, and be not drunk with fenfuality and fenflesness, he need not much to dispute before he pass the sentence. For nothing can be given to us to recompense the loss of Heaven; and if our Souls be lost, there is nothing remaining to us whereby we can be happy.

What shall it profit a man? or What shall a man give? Is there any exchange for a man's Soul? The question is an august of the negative. thing can be given for an aira Nayua, or aprice to satisfie for its los.

The blood of the Son of God was given to recover it, or as an ἀνλάγμα to God; and when our Souls were forfeit to him, nothing less than the life and passion of God and man could pay the price, (I say) to God; who yet was not concerned in the loss, fave only that such was his goodness, that it pitied him to see his creature lost. But to us what shall be the άντάλλαγμα? what can make us recompence when we have lost our own Souls, and are lost in a miserable Eternity? What can then recompense us? Not all the World, not ten thousand worlds: and of this that miserable man whose Soul is lost is the best judge. For the question is addwill won and hath a potential fignification, and means more an odor, that is, Suppose a man ready to die, condemned to the sentence of a horrid death, heightned with the circumstances of trembling and amazement, what would be give to fave his life? Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and all that a man hath, will be give for his life. And this turned to a Proverbamong the Jews; for so the last words of the Text are, τί δώσει ἄνθεωπος ἀνθάλλαγμα το Υυχίκς; Which Proverb being usually meant concerning a temporal death, and intended to represent the sadnesses of a condemned person, our Blesfed Saviour fits to his own purpole, and translates to the fignification of death eternal, which he first revealed clearly to the world. And because no interest of the world can make a man recompence for his life, because to lose that makes him incapable of enjoying the exchange, (and he were a strange fool who, having no design upon Immortality or Vertue, should be willing to be hanged for a thousand pound per annum) this argument increases infinitely in the purpose of our Blessed Saviour; and to gain the world, and to lose our Souls, in the Christian sence, is infinitely more madness and a worse exchange, than when our souls signifie nothing but a temporal life. And although possibly the indefinite hopes of Elysium, or an honourable name, might tempt some hardy persons to leave this world, hoping for a better condition, even among the Heathen; yet no excuse will acquit a Christian from madness, if for the purchase of

this world he lose his Eternity.

Here then, First we will consider the Propositions of the Exchange, the World and a man's Soul, by way of Supposition, supposing all that is pro-pounded were obtained, the whole world. Secondly, we will consider, what is likely to be obtained really and indeed of the World, and what are really the miseries of a lost Soul. For it is propounded in the Text by way of fupposition, If a man should gain the world, which no man ever did, nor ever can; and he that gets most, gets too little to be exchanged for a temporal life. And Thirdly, I shall apply it to your practice, and make material Confidential rial Confiderations. 1. Fuft,

1. First, then, suppose a man gets all the World, what is it that he SERM. gets? It is a bubble and a phantalm, and hath no reality beyond a prefent transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and ulages are transmitted to us by parts, and by succession. He that hath all the world, (if we can suppose such a man) cannot have a dish of fresh Summer-fruits in the midst of Winter, not so much as a green Fig: and very much of its possessions is so hid, so sugacious and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the Sea to the Lord of the Shore; all the fish and wealth within all its hollownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get : All the Shell-fishes that produce Pearl, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements: so that it will signifie as much to this great purchaser to be intitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not to much as know of them, nor understand the Philosophy of her

2. I consider that he that is the greatest possessor in the world enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferiour persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest Prince inclose the Sun and set one little Star in his Cabinet for his own use? or secure to himself the gentle and benign influences of any one Constellation? Are not his subjects fields bedewed with the fame showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay those things which he esteems his ornament and the singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself? For suppose his Garments splendid and shining like the robe of a Cherub or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys is that they keep him warm and clean, and modest; and all this is done by clean and less pompous vestments; and the beauty of them, which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meritricious painting of a wanton woman, made wholly to be looked on, that is, to be enjoyed by every one but himfelf and the fairest face and the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflexion. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gaiety, and the gay man in his greatest bravery is only pleased because I am pleafed with the fight; so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency from the delight that I have, not from any inherency of his own possession.

The poorest Artizan of Rome walking in Casar's Gardens had the same pleasures which they ministred to their Lord: And although it may be he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cefar's: the Birds made him as good mulick, the Flowers gave him as fweet smells, he there sucked as good Air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception as the Prince himself; save only that Casar paid for all that pleasure vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a Pro-

vince, which the poor man had for nothing.

3. Suppose a man Lord of all the World, (for still we are but in suppolition;) yet lince every thing is received not according to its own greatness and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver, it lignifies very little as to our content, or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a Liona fair Meadow full of hay, or a thousand Quince-trees; or should give to the goodly Bull, the Master and the fairelt of the whole Herd a thousand fair Stags; if a man should present to a Child a thip laden with Persian Carpets, and the ingredients

of the rich Scarlet; all thefe, being disproportionate either to the appetite or to the understanding could add nothing of content, and might de- SER M. clare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the XVIII: receiver. And so it does if God should give the whole world to any man. He knows not what to do with it; he can use no more but according to the capacities of a man; he can use nothing but meat and drink and clothes; and infinite riches, that can give him changes of raiment every day and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats; it fignifies no more but wantonness, and variety to the same, not to any new purposes. He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him: he needs the understanding of an Angel, to take the accounts of his estate; he had need have a stomach like fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects; and unless he hath an eye like the Sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the Orbs of Heaven, the Pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packt up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of Jewels, better than which there is no man that fees at all but fees every day. For not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of Heaven, a mans, or a womans, or a hauk's eye is more beauteous and excellent than all the Jewels of his Crown. And when we remember that a Beast, who hath quicker senses than a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding, and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception; it will follow, that Understanding and Knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing hath a capacity to become happy, which a less-knowing Prince or a rich person hath not: and in this only a mans capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly who rightly understand the nature and degrees and efsences and ends of things; yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and the unfatisfyingness of the things of this world, so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time; the Understanding fees all, and fees through it.

4. The greatest vanity of this world is remarkable in this, that all its joys summed up together are not big enough to counterpoise the evil of one sharp disease, or to allay a sorrow. For imagine a man great in his Dominion as Cyrus, rich as Solomon, victorious as David, beloved like Titw, learned as Triftmegift, powerful as all the Roman greatness; all this, and the refults of all this, give him no more pleasure in the midst of a Fever or the tortures of the Stone, than if he were only Lord of a little dish, and a dish-full of fountain-water. Indeed the excellency of a holy Conscience is a comfort and a magazine of joy, so great, that it sweetens the most bitter potion of the world, and makes tortures and death not only tolerable, but amiable, and therefore to part with this, whose excellency is so great, for the world, that is of so inconsiderable a worth, as not to have in it recompence enough for the forrows of a sharp disease, is a bargain fit to be made by none but fools and mad-men. Antiochus Epiphanes, and Herod the great, and his grand-child Agrippa, were fad instances of this great truth; to every of which it happened, that the grandeur of their fortune, the greatness of their possessions, and the encrease of their estate disappeared and expired like Camphire, at their arrest by those several sharp diseases, which covered their head with Cypress, and hid their Crowns in an inglorious grave.

For what can all the world minister to a sick person, if it represents all ERM. the spoils of nature, and the choicest delicacies of land and sea? Alas! his appetitite is loft, and to see a pebble-stone is more pleasing to him: VIII. For he can look upon that without loathing, but not so upon the most delicious fare that ever made famous the Roman luxury. Perfumes make his head ake: if you load him with jewels, you press him with a burthen as troublesome as his grave-stone: and what pleasure is in all those posfessions that cannot make his pillow easie, nor tame the rebellion of a tumultuous humour, nor restore the use of a withered hand, or straighten a crooked singer? Vain is the hope of that man whose soul rests upon vanity, and fuch unprofitable possessions.

5. Suppose a man Lord of all this World, an universal Monarch, as fome Princes have lately deligned; all that cannot minister content to

him; not that content which a poor contemplative man by the strength of Christian Philosophy, and the support of a very small fortune, daily does enjoy. All his power and greatness cannot command the sea to overflow his shoars, or to stay from retiring to the opposite strand: It cannot make his children dutiful or wife. And though the world admired at the greatness of Philip the second's fortune in the accession of Portugal and the East-Indies to his Principalities; yet this could not allay the infelicity of his Family, and the unhandsomness of his condition, in having a proud, and indifcreet, and vicious young Prince likely to inherit all his greatness. And if nothing appears in the face of such a fortune to tell all the world that it is spotted and imperfect; yet there is in all conditions of the world such weariness and tediousness of the spirits, that a man is ever more pleased with hopes of going off from the present, than in dwelling upon that condition which, it may be, others admire and think beauteous, but none knoweth the smart of it but he that drank off the little pleasure, and felt the ill relish of the appendage. How many Kings have groaned under the burthen of their Crowns, and have funk down and died? How many have quitted their pompous cares; and retired into private lives, there to enjoy the pleasures of Philosophy and Religion, which their Thrones denied?

And if we consider the supposition of the Text, the thing will demonstrate it self. For he who can be supposed the owner and purchaser of the whole world, must either be a King or a private person. A private perfon can hardly be supposed to be the man: For if he be subject to another, how can he be Lord of the whole world? But if he be a King, it is certain that his cares are greater than any mans, his fears are bigger, his evils mountainous, the accidents that discompose him are more frequent, and fometimes intolerable; and of all his great possessions he hath not the greatest use and benefit; but they are like a great harvest, which more labourers must bring in, and more must eat of; only he is the centre of all the cares, and they fix upon him, but the profits run out to all the lines of the circle, to all that are about him, whose good is therefore greater than the good of the Prince, because what they enjoy is the pur-

chase of the Prince's care, and so they feed upon his cost.

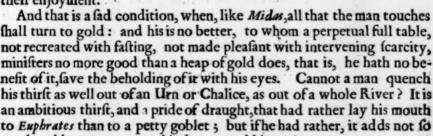
Horat.l. s. fat.

Privatusque magis vivam te Rege beatus.

Servants live the best lives; for their care is single, only how to please their Lord:but all the burthen of a troublesome providence and ministration makes the outfide pompous and more full of ceremony; but intricates the condition, and disturbs the quiet of the great possessor.

And

And imagine a person as blest as can be supposed upon the stock of worldly interest; when all his accounts are cast up, he differs nothing SER M. from his subjects or his servants but in mere circumstance, nothing of reality or substance. He hath more to wait at his Tables, or persons of XVIII. higher rank to do the meanest offices, more ceremonies of address, a fairer Escutcheon, louder Titles: but can this multitude of dishes make him have a good stomach, or does not satiety cloy it? when his high diet is fuch, that he is not capable of being feasted, and knows not the frequent delights and oftener possibilities a poor man hath of being refreshed, while not only his labour makes hunger, and fo makes his meat delicate; (and then it cannot be ill fare, let it be what it will) but also his provifion is such, that every little addition is a direct Feast to him, while the greatest owner of the world, giving to himself the utmost of his desires, hath nothing left beyond his ordinary, to become the entertainment of his Festival-days, but more loads of the same meat. And then let him confider how much of felicity can this condition contribute to him, in which fame chiffs he is not farther gone beyond a person of a little fortune in the greatness rola. of his possession, than he is fallen short in the pleasures and possibility of their enjoyment.



much to his content, as to his danger and his vanity.

Plenior ut siquos delectat copiajusto, Cum ripa simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer.

For fo I have heard of persons whom the river hath swept away together with the Turf they pressed, when they stooped to drown their pride

rather than their thirst 6. But this supposition hath a lessening term. If a man could be born heir of all the world it were something: But no man ever was so, except him only who enjoyed the least of it, the Son of man that bad not where to lay his head. But in the supposition it is, [If a man could [gain] the whole world which supposes labour and forrow, trouble and expence, venture and hazard, and so much time expired in its acquist and purchase, that, belides the possession is not secured to us for a term of life, so our lives are almost expired before we become estated in our purchases. And indeed it is a fad thing to see an ambitious or a covetous person make his life unpleasant, troublesome and vexatious, to grasp a power bigger than himself, to fight for it with infinite hazards of his life, so that it is a thousand to one but he perishes in the attempt, and gets nothing at all but an untimely grave, a reproachful memory, and an early damnation. But suppose he gets a victory, and that the unhappy party is put to begin a new game; then to see the fears, the watchfulness, the diligence, the laborious arts to secure a possession, lest the desperate party should recover a desperate game. And suppose this with a new stock of labours, danger and expence, be seconded by a new success; then to

look upon the new emergencies, and troubles, and discontents among his SERM. friends about parting the spoil; the envies, the jealousies, the slanders, the underminings, and the perpetual insecurity of his condition: All this XVIII. Isay, is to see a man take infinite pains to make himself miserable. if he will be so unlearned as to call this gallantry or a splendid fortune; yet by this time, when he remembers he hath certainly spent much of his time, in trouble, and how long he shall enjoy this he is still uncertain; he is not certain of a moneth, and suppose it be seven years, yet when he comes to die, and cast up his accounts, and shall find nothing remaining but a fad remembrance of evils and troubles past, and expectations of worfe; infinitely worfe, he must acknowledge himself convinced, that to gain all this world is a fortune not worth the labour and the dangers, the fears and transportations of passions, though the Soul's loss be

not considered in the bargain.

But I told you all this while that this is but a Supposition still, the putting of a case, or like a fiction of Law, nothing real. For if we consider in the Second place, how much every man is likely to get really, and how much it is possible for any man to get, we shall find the account far shorter yet, and the purchase most trifling and inconsiderable. For first the world is at the same time enjoyed by all its inhabitants, and the same portion of it by several persons in their several capacities. A Prince enjoys his whole Kingdom, not as all his people enjoys it, but in the manner of a Prince; the subject in the manner of subjects. The Prince hath certain Regalia beyond the rest; but the feudal right of subjects does them more emolument, and the Regalia does the Prince more honour: and those that hold the fees in subordinate right, transmit it also to their Tenants, beneficiaries and dependants, to publick uses, to charity, and hospitality; all which is a lessening of the lord's possessions, and a cutting his river into little streams, not that himself alone, but that all his relatives may drink to be refreshed. Thus the Well where the Woman of Samaria sate was Jacob's Well, and he drank of it, but so did his wives and his children, and his cattel. So that what we call ours is really ours but for our portion of expence and use; we have so little of it, that our servants have far more; and that which is ours is nothing but the title, and the care, and the trouble of securing and dispensing; save only that God, whose stewards we all are, will call fuch owners (as they are pleased to call themselves) to strict accounts for their disbursements. And by this account the possession, or dominion, is but a word, and serves a fancy, or a passion, or a vice, but no real end of nature. It is the use and spending it that makes a man to all real purposes of nature to be the owner of it, and in this the lord and mafter hath but a share.

2. But secondly, consider how far short of the whole world the greatest Prince that ever reigned did come. Alexander, that wept because he had no more Worlds to conquer, was in his knowledge deceived and brutilh, as in his passion: he over-ran much of Asia; but he could never pass the Ganges, and never thrust his sword in the bowels of Europe, and knew nothing of America. And the Oinsulfun, or the whole world, began to have an appropriate sence, and was rather put to the Roman Greatness as an honourable Appellative than did fignifie that they were Lords of the world, who never went beyond Persia, Egypt, nor Britain.

But why do I talk of great things in this Question of the Exchange of the Soul for the World? Because it is real bargain which many men (too many, God knows) do make, we must consider it as applicable to practice. Every man that loses his Soul for the purchase of the World

must not look to have the portion of a King. How few men are Princes, and of those that are not born, so, how seldom instances are found in story of persons that by their industry became so? But we must come far XVI lower yet. Thousands there are that damn themselves; and yet their purchase at long-running, and after a base and weary life spent, is but five hundred pounds a year; nay, it may be they only cozen an easie person out of a good estate, and pay for it at an easie rate, which they obtain by lying, by drinking, by flattery, by force; and the gain is nothing but a thousand pound in the whole, or it may be nothing but a convenience. Nay, how many men hazard their Salvation for an acre of ground, for twenty pound to please a master, to get a small and a kind utage from a fuperior? These men get but little though they did not give so much for it. So little, that Epidetus thought the purchase dear enough though you paid nothing for it but flattery and observance, ου παρεκλή θης εφ' εςίασίν דויסבים אל בלמאמה דם אמאציוו סבצ חבי אבודמו דם לבודיים בחמנים ל' משדם חביאבים לבים בבים דויסבים as, πωλε, Observance was the price of his meal; and he paid too dear for one that gave his birth-right for it; but he that exchanges his foul for it, knows not the vanity of his purchase, nor the value of his loss. He that gains the purchase and spoil of a Kingdom, hath got that which to all that are placed in Heaven, or to a man that were feated in the paths of the Sun, feems but like a fpot in an eye, or a Mathematical point, so without vastness, that it seems to be without dimensions. But he whose purchase is but his neighbour's field, or a few unjust acres, hath got that which is inconsiderable, below the notice and description of the Map: for by such Hieroglyphical representments socrates chid the vanity of a proud Atbenian.

3. Although these premisses may suffice to shew that the supposed purchase is but vain, and that all which men use really to obtain is less than trifles; yet even the possession of it, whatsoever it be, is not meet and unmixt, but allayed with forrow and uneafiness: the gain hath but enlarged his appetite, and, like a draught to an Hydropick person, hath enraged his thirst; and still that which he hath not is infinitely bigger than what he hath, fince the first enlargement of his purchase was not to satisfie necessity, but his passion, his bust or his avarice, his pride or his revenge; these things cease not by their sewel, but their slames grow bigger, and the capacities are firetched, and they want more than they did at first. For who wants most, he that wants five pound, or he that wants five thousand? And supposing a man naturally supported and provided for, in the dispensations of nature there is no difference, but that the poor hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich man can never have enough to fill his eye. The poor mans wants are no greater than what may be supplied by charity; and the rich mans wants are so big, that none but Princes can relieve them; and they are left to all the tempta-

tions of great Vices and huge Cares to make their reparations.

Dives eget gemmis, Cereali munere pauper : Sed cum egeant ambo; pauper egens minus eft.

If the greatness of the world's possessions produce such fruits, vexation, and care, and want; the ambitious requiring of great estates is but like the felling of a fountain to buy a fever, a parting with content to buy necessity, and the purchase of an unhandsome condition at the price of infelicity.

4. He that enjoys a great portion of this world hath most commonly the allay of some great Cross, which although sometimes God designs in mercy;

mercy, to wean his affections from the world, and for the abstracting ERM. them from fordid adherencies and cohabitation, to make his eyes like stars, to fix them in the orbs of Heaven and the regions of felicity; yet VIII. they are an inseparable appendant and condition of humanity. Solomon observed the vanity of some persons, that heaped up great riches for their heirs, and yet knew not whether a wise man or a fool should possess themsthis is a great evil under the Sun. And if we observe the great crosses many times God permits in great Families, as, discontent in Marriages, artificial or natural Bastardies, a society of man and wife like the conjunction of two politicks, full of state and ceremony and design, but empty of those sweet caresses, and natural hearty complications and endearments, usual in meaner and innocent persons; the perpetual sicknels, fulnels of diet, fear of dying, the abuse of flatterers, the trouble and noise of company, the tedious officiousness of impertinent and ceremonious visits, the declension of estate, the sadness of spirit, the notoriousness of those dishonours which the meanness of lower persons conceals, but their eminency makes as visible as the spots in the Moon's face; we shall find him to be most happy that hath most of wisdom and least of the world, because he only hath the least danger and the most se-

5. And lastly, his Soul so gets nothing that wins all this world, if he loses his Soul, that it is ten to one but he that gets the one, therefore shall lose the other: For to a great and opulent fortune, sin is so adherent and infinuating, that it comes to him in the nature of civility. It is a fad fight to see a great Personage undertake an action passionately and upon great interest; and let him manage it as indiscreetly, let the whole de-fign be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enow to tell him that he proceeds wisely enough, to be servants of his interest, and promoters of his fin, instruments of his malice, and actors of revenge. But which of all his relatives shall dare to tell him of his indifcretion, of his rage, and of his folly? He had need be a bold man and a severe person that shall tell him of his danger, and that he is in a direct progress towards Hell. And indeed such personages have been so long nourished up in softness, flattery, and effeminacy, that too often themselves are impatient of a monitor, and think the charity and duty of a modest reprehension to be a rudeness and incivility. That Prince is a wife man that loves to have it otherwise: And certainly it is a strange civility and dutifulness in friends and relatives, to suffer him to go to Hell uncontrolled, rather than to feem unmannerly towards a great finner. But certainly this is none of the least infelicities of them who are Lords of the world, and masters of great posfellions.

I omit to speak of the habitual Intemperance which is too commonly annexed to festival and delicious Tables, where there is no other meafure or restraint upon the appetite, but its fulness and satiety, and when it cannot or dare not eat more. Oftentimes it happens, that the intemperance of a poor table is more temperate and hath less of luxury in it than the temperance of a rich. To this are consequent all the evil accidents and effects of Fulness, Pride, Lust, Wantonness, softnesses of dispolition, and diffolution of manners, huge talking, imperiousness, despite and contempt of poor persons: and at the best it is a great temptation for a man to have in his power what soever he can have in his sensual desires. Who then shall check his voracity, or calm his revenge, or allay his pride, or mortifie his luft, or humble his spirit? It is like as when a luftful young

and tempted person lives perpetually with his amorous and delicious Miltris; if he scapes burning that is inflamed from within and set on fire SER M. from without, it is a greater miracle than the escaping from the flames of XVIII the furnace by the three Children of the Captivity. And just such a thing is the possession of the world, it furnishes us with abilities to sin and opportunities of ruine, and it makes us to dwell with poisons, and dangers, and enemies.

And although the grace of God is sufficient to great personages and masters of the world, and that it is possible for a young man to be tied upon a bed of flowers, and fastned by the arms and band of a Courtesan, and tempted wantonly, and yet to escape the danger and the crime, and to triumph glorioully; (for so Saint Hierom reports of a son of the King of Nicomedia;) and riches and a free fortune are defigned by God to be a mercy, and an opportunity of doing noble things, and excellent Charity, and exact Justice, and to protect innocence, and to defend oppressed people: yet it is a mercy mixt with much danger; yet it is like the prefent of a whole Vintage to a man in an hectick Fever; he will be shrewdly tempted to drink of it, and if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die with the kindness. Happy are those persons who use the world, and abuse it not, who possess a part of it, and love it for no other ends but for necessities of nature, and conveniences of person, and discharge of all their duty and the offices of Religion, and Charity to Christ and all Christ's members. But fince he that hath all the world carmot command Nature to do him one office extraordinary, and enjoys the best part but in common with the poorest man in the world, and can use no more of it but according to a limited and a very narrow capacity, and whatfoever he can use or possess cannot out-weigh the present pressure of a sharp disease, nor can it at all give him content, without which there can be nothing of felicity; fince a Prince in the matter of using the world differs nothing from his subjects, but in mere accidents and circumstances, and yet these very many trifling differences are not to be obtained but by fo much labour and care, fo great expence of time and trouble, that the possession will not pay thus much of the price; and after all this, the man may die two hours after he hath made his troublesome and expensive purchase, and is certain not to enjoy it long; add to this last, that most men get so little of the world that it is altogether of a triffing and inconfiderable interest; that they who have the most of this world have the most of that but in title and in supreme rights and referved privileges, the real use descending upon others to more substantial purposes; that the possession of this trifle is mixt with sorrow upon other accidents, and is allayed with fear, and that the greatness of mens possessions increases their thirst, and enlarges their wants by swelling their capacity; and, above all, is of so great danger to a mans Vertue, that a great Fortune and a very great Vertue are not always ob-ferved to grow together: He that observes all this, and much more he may observe, will see that he that gains the whole world hath made no fuch great bargain of it, although he had it for nothing, but the necessary unavoidable troubles in getting it. But how great a folly is it to buy so great a trouble, so great a vanity with the loss of our precious Souls, remains to be confidered in the following parts of the Text.



SERMON XIX.

PART II.

Nd lose his own Soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul? And now the question is finally stated, and the dispute is concerning the fum of affairs.

De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa.

And therefore when the Soul is at stake, not for its temporal, but for its eternal interest, it is not good to be hasty in determining, without taking just measures of the Exchange. Solomon had the good things of the world actually in possession, and he tried them at the touch-stone of prudence and natural value, and found them allayed with vanity and imperfection; and we that see them weighed in the ballance of the Sandinary, and tried by the touch-stone of the Spirit, find them not only light and unprofitable, but pungent and dolorous. But now we are to confider what it is that men part with and lose, when with passion and impotency they get the world; and that will present the bargain to be an huge infelicity. And this I observe to be intimated in the word, [lose.] For he that gives gold for cloth, or precious stones for bread, serves his needs of nature, and loses nothing by it; and the Merchant that found a pearl of great price, and fold all that he had to make the purchase of it, made a good venture, he was no loser: but here the case is otherwise; when a man gains the whole world, and his Soul goes in the exchange, he hath not done like a merchant, but like a child or prodigal; he hath given himself away, he hath lost all that can distinguish him from a slave or a miserable person, he loses his Soul in the exchange. For the Soul of a man all the world cannot be a just price; a man may lose it, or throw it away, but he can never make a good exchange when he parts with this Jewel: and therefore our Bleffed Saviour rarely well expresses it by Comeso, which is fully opposed to regoos gain; it is such an ill market a man makes, as if he should proclaim his riches and goods vendible for a garland of Thistles decked and trimmed up with the stinking Poppy.

But we shall better understand the nature of this Bargain if we consider the Soul that is exchanged, what it is in it felf, in order, not of nature, but to felicity and the capacities of joy; secondly, what price the Son of God payed for it; and thirdly, what it is to lose it; that is, what miseries and tortures are signified by losing a Soul.

1. First, if we consider what the Soul is in its own capacity to happiness, we shall find it to be an excellency greater than the Sun, of an Angelical substance, fister to a Cherubin, an image of the Divinity, and the great argument of that Mercy whereby God did distinguish us from the lower form of Beasts, and Trees, and Minerals.

For so it was the Scripture affirms, that, God made man after his own Image, that is, secundum illam imaginem & ideam quam concepit ipse; not according to the likeness of any of those creatures which were pre-ex-

frent to mans production, not according to any of those images or tdeas whereby God created the Heavens and the Earth; but by a new form, to distinguish him from all other substances; he made him by a new idea of his own, by an uncreated exemplar. And besides that this was a donation of Intelligent faculties, such as we understand to be perfect and effential, or rather the essence of God; it is also a designation of him to a glorious immortality, and communication of the rays and reflexions of his own essential felicities.



But the Soul is all that whereby we may be, and without which we cannot be happy. It is not the eye that sees the beauties of the Heaven, nor the ear that hears the sweetness of musick, or the glad tidings of a prosperous accident, but the soul that perceives all the relishes of senfual and intellectual perfections; and the more noble and excellent the Soul is, the greater and more favoury are its perceptions. And if a child beholds the rich Ermine, or the Diamonds of a Starry night, or the order of the world, or hears the discourses of an Apostle; because he makes no reflex acts upon himself, and sees not that he sees, he can have but the pleasure of a fool, or the deliciousness of a mule. But although the reflexion of its own acts be a rare instrument of pleasure or pain respectively; yet the Soul's excellency is upon the same reason not perceived by us, by which the sapidness of pleasant things of nature are not understood by a Child; even because the soul cannot reflect far enough. For as the Sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, makes violent and direct emissions of his rays from himself, but reflects them no farther than to the bottom of a cloud, or the lowest imaginary circle of the middle region, and therefore receives not a duplicate of his own heat : so is the soul of man, it reflects upon its own inferiour actions of particular sense, or general understanding; but because it knows little of its own nature, the manners of Volition, the immediate instruments of Understanding, the way how it comes to meditate; and cannot discern how a sudden thought arrives, or the solution of a doubt not depending upon preceding premisses; therefore above half its pleasures are abated, and its own worth less understood: and possibly it is the better it is so. If the Elephant knew his strength, or the Horse the vigorousness of his own spirit, they would be as rebellious against their rulers as unreasonable men against Government : nay the Angels themselves because their light reflected home to their Orbs, and they understood all the secrets of their own perfection, they grew vertiginous, and fell from the battlements of Heaven. But the excellency of a humane foul shall then be truly understood, when the reflexion will make no distraction of our faculties, nor enkindle any irregular fires; when we may understand our felves without danger.

In the mean this confideration is gone high enough, when we understand the soul of a man to be so excellently perfect, that we cannot understand how excellently perfect it is; that being the best way of expressing our conceptions of God himself. And therefore I shall not need by distinct discourses to represent that the Will of man is the last resort and fanctuary of true pleasure, which in its formality can be nothing else but a conformity of possession or of being to the will; that the Understanding, being the chanel and conveyance of the noblest perceptions, feeds upon pleasures in all its proportionate acts, and unless it be disturbed by intervening sins and remembrances derived hence, keeps a perpetual Festival; that the Passions are every of them sitted with an object, in which they rest as in their centre; that they have such delight in these

SERM. XIX. their proper objects, that too often they venture a damnation rather than quit their interest and possession. But yet from these considerations it would follow, that to lose a soul, which is designed to be an immense sea of pleasure, even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be, or be supposed happy. And so much the rather is this understood to be an insupportable calamity, because losing a soul in this sence is not a mere privation of those selicities of which a soul is naturally designed to be a partaker, but it is an investing it with contrary objects, and cross effects, and dolorous perceptions: For the Will, if it mittes its desires, is afflicted; and the Understanding, when it ceases to be ennobled with excellent things, is made ignorant as a swife, dull as the foot of a rock; and the Affections are in the destitution of their perfective actions made tumultuous, vexed and discomposed, to the height of rage and violence. But this is but the destinant, the beginning of

those threes which end not but in eternal intelicity.

2. Secondly, if we consider the price that the Son of God payed for the redemption of a foul, we shall better estimate of it than from the weak discourses of our impersect and unlearned Philosophy: Not the spoil of rich Provinces, not the estimate of Kingdoms, nor the price of Cleopatra's draught, not any thing that was corruptible or perithing; for that which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one periffing foul. And if we lift but to remember, and then confider, that a miferable, loft and accurled foul, does so infinitely undervalue and disrelish all the goods and riches that this world dotes on, that he hath no more guft in them, or pleasure than the Fox hath in eating a turf; that if he could be imagined to be the Lord of ten thousand worlds, he would give them all for any shadow of hope of a possibility of returning to life again; that Dives in Hell would have willingly gone on Embaffy to his father's house, that he might have been quit a little from his flames, and on that condition would have given Lazarus the fee-simple of all his temporal possessions, though he had once denied to relieve him with the superfluities of his Table: we shall soon confess that a moment of time is no good exchange for an eternity of duration; and a light unprofitable possession is not to be put in the ballance against a soul, which is the glory of the creation; a soul, with whom God had made a contract, and contracted excellent relations, it being one of God's appellatives, that he is [the lover of the Souls.

When God made a foul, it was only, Faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram; He spake the word, and it was done: But when man had lost this Soul which the Spirit of God breathed in him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the Resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption: but for this Resurrection of the soul, for the re-implacing the Divine Image, for the rescuing it from the Devil's power, for the re-initialing it to the Kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the Creation: He was fain to contract Divinity to a span, to send a Person to die for us who of himself could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying; he prepared a person instrumental to his put pose, by sending his Son from his own bosom a person both God and Man, an anigma to all Nations, and to all Sciences; one that ruled over all the Angels, that walked upon the pavements of Heaven, whose feet were cloathed with Stars, whose eyeswere brighter

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than the Sun, whose voice is louder than thunder, whose understanding is larger than that infinite space which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first Orb of Heaven; a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God; this was the only Person that was de-signed in the eternal decrees of the Divine Predestination to pay the price of a Soul, to ransom us from death less than this person could not do it. For although a foul in its effence is finite, yet there were many infinites which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls: For all which because provision was to be made, nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfie for a soul who was lost to infinite and eternal ages, who was to be afflicted with insupportable and indetermined, that is, next to infinite, pains; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one half of the abyss, and I think the leffer: For that this person who was God eternal, should be lessened in all his appearances to a span, to the little dimensions of a man, and that he should really become very contemptibly little, although at the same rime he was infinitely and unalterably great 3 that is, effential, natural and neceffary Felicity (hould turn into an intolerable, violent and immense calalamity to his person, that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our Redemption, unless he would suffer that horrid misery which that lost soul should suffer; as it represents the glories of his goodness who used such rare and admirable instruments in actuating the defigns of his mercy, so it shews our condition to have been very desperate and our loss invaluable.

SERMI XIX.

A Soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures of the Son of God; and yet we throw it away for the exchange of fins that a man naturally is assamed to own; we lose it for the pleasure, the sottish beastly pleasure of a night. I need not say, we lose our foul to fave our lives : for though that was our Bleffed Sayiour's instance of the great unreasonableness of men, who by saving their lives, lose them, that is, in the great account of Dooms-day; though this (I fay) be extremely unreasonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain; nothing to excuse him with God, but something in the accounts of timorous men: but to lose our souls with Swearing, that unprofitable, dishonourable, and unpleasant Vice; to lose our souls with Disobedience or Rebellion, a Vice that bring a curse and danger all the way in this life; to lose our souls with Drunkenness, a Vice which is painful and fickly in the very acting it, which hastens our damnation by shortning our lives; are instances fit to be put in the stories of sools and mad-men. And all Vice is a degree of the same unreasonableness; the most splendid Temptation being nothing but a pretty well weaved fallacy, a meer trick, a Sophism, and a cheating and abusing the understanding. But that which I consider here, is, that it is an affront and contradiction to the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul, in which our interest is so concerned; a soul, which he who made it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase to be made by the exchange of his Son, the eternal Son of God. To which also I add this additional account, that a soul is so greatly valued by God, that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. For therefore whosoever should commit a fin to save Kingdoms from perishing; or if the case could be put, that all the good men, and good causes, and good things in this world were to be destroyed by Tyranny, and it were in our power by Perjury to save all these;



that doing this fin would be so far from hallowing the crime, that it were to offer to God a sacrifice of what he most hates, and to serve him with swines blood: and the rescuing all these from a Tyrant or a hangman could not be pleasing to God upon those terms because a soul is lost by it, which is in it self a greater loss and misery than all the evils in the world put together can out-ballance, and a loss of that thing for which Christ gave his blood a price. Persecutions and temporal death in holy men, and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and therefore not to be bought off with the loss of a Soul, which is a real, but an intoserable calamity. And if God for his own sake would not have all the world saved by sin, that is, by the hazarding of a Soul; we should do well for our own sakes not to lose a soul for trisles, for things that make us here to be mi-

ferable, and even here also to be ashamed.

But it may be some natures or some understandings care not for all this; therefore I proceed to the third and most material consideration as to us 3 and I consider what it is to lose a soul. Which Hierocles thus explicates, ως οιον άθανατας κοία θανατας μοίους μεταλαχείν, ε τη είς το μη είναι αποκάσει, άλλα τη τε εί είναι άποπ ωσε, An immortal substance can die, not by ceasing to be, but by losing all being well, by becoming miserable. And it is remarkable, when our Blessed Saviour gave us caution that we should not fear them that can kill the body only, but fear him (he says not that can kill the Soul, but το δυνάμερον η ψοχην η σώμα ἀπωλέσαι ε΄ν γεέννη,) that is able to destroy the body and soul in hell 3 which word signifieth not death, but tortures. For some have chosen death for Sanctuary, and sled to it to avoid intolerable shame, to give a period to the sense of a sharp grief, or to cure the earthquakes of fear; and the damned perissing souls shall wish for death with a desire as impatient as their

calamity: but this shall be denied them, because death were a deli-

verance, a mercy, and a pleasure, of which these miserable persons must despair for ever.

I shall not need to represent to your considerations those expressions of Scripture which the Holy Ghost hath set down to represent to our capacities the greatness of this Perishing, chusing such circumstances of character as were then usual in the world, and which are dreadful to our understanding as any thing. [Hell fire] is the common expression; for the Eastern nations accounted Burnings the greatest of these mi-serable punishments; and burning malesactors was frequent. [Brimstone and fire,] fo S. John, Revel. 14. 10. calls the state of punishment, prepared for the Devil and all his servants; he added the circumstance of Brimstone, for by this time the Devil had taught the world more ingenious pains, and himfelf was newly escaped out of boiling oil and brimstone, and fuch bituminous matter; and the Spirit of God knew right-well the worst expression was not bad enough. Endros & Edware 95, so our Blessed Saviour calls it, the outer darkness; that is, not only an abjection from the beatifick regions, where God and his Angels and his Saints dwell for ever, but then there is a positive state of misery expressed by darkness, 26000 outres, as two Apostles, S. Peter and S. Judo, call it, the blackness of darkness for ever. In which although it is certain that God, whose Justice there rules, will inslict but just so much as our sins deserve, and not superadd degrees of undeserved misery, as he does to the Saints of glory, (for God gives to bleffed Souls in Heaven more, infinitly more, than all their good works could possibly deserve, and therefore their glory is infinitely bigger glory than the pains of Hell are great pains;) yet because God's Justice in Hell rules alone, without the allays and sweeter

Mat. 19.28.

abatements of Mercy, they shall have pure and unmingled misery; no pleasant thought to refresh their weariness, no comfort in another acci- SER M. dent to alleviate their pressures, no waters to cool their flames. But because when there is a great calamity upon a man, every such man thinks himself the most miserable; and though there are great degrees of pain in Hell, yet there are none perceived by him that thinks he suffers the greatest; it follows, that every man that loses his Soul in this darkness is miserable beyond all those expressions which the tortures of this world

could furnish to the Writers of the Holy Scripture.

But I shall chuse to represent this consideration in that expression of our Bleffed Saviour, Mark 9.44. which himself took out of the Prophet Esay, 66. 24. Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. This is the συντελείας ερήμασις, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet: for although this expression was a prediction of that horrid calamity and abscission of the Jewish Nation, when God poured out a full vial of his wrath upon the Crucifiers of his Son, and that this, which was the greatest calamity which ever did or ever shall happen to a Nation, Christ with great reason took to describe the calamity of accursed Souls, as being the greatest instance to signific the greatest torment: yet we must observe that the difference of each state, makes the same words in the several cases to be of infinite distinction. The worm stuck close to the Jewish Nation, and the fire of God's wrath flamed out till they were confumed with a great and unheard of destruction, till many millions did die accursedly, and the small remnant became vagabonds, and were reserved,like broken pieces after a storm, to shew the greatness of the storm and mifery of the shipwreck: but then this being translated to signific the state of accurfed Souls, whose dying is a continual perishing, who cannot cease to be, it must mean an eternity of duration in a proper and natural signification.

And that we may understand it fully, observe the place in Esa. 34. 8, &c. The prophet prophelies of the great destruction of Jerusalem for all her great iniquities: It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversie of Sion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever. This is the final destruction of the Nation; but this destruction shall have an end, because the Nation shall end, and the anger also shall end in its own period, even then when God shall call the Jews into the common inheritance with the Gentiles, and all become the fons of God. And this also was the period of their worm, as it is of their fire, the fire of the Divine vengeance upon the Nation; which was not to be extinguished till they were destroyed, as we see it come to pass. And thus also in S. Jude, the Angels who kept not their first state are said to be reserved by God in everlasting chains under darkness: which word [everlasting] signifies not absolutely to eternity, but to the utmost end of that period; for so it follows, [unto the judgement of the great day,] that [everlasting] lasts no longer. And in verse 7. the word [eternal] is just so used. The men of Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of [eternal fire;] that is, of a fire which burned till they were quite destroyed, and the Cities and the Countrey with an irreparable ruine, never to be re-built and re-inhabited as long as this world continues. The effect of which observation is this:

That



SERM. XIX.

That these words, [for ever, everlasting, eternal, the never-dying worm, the fire unquenchable] being words borrowed by our Bleffed Saviour and his Apostles from the style of the Old Testament, must have a significa-tion just proportionable to the state in which they signifie: so that as this Worm, when it fignifies a temporal infliction, means a worm that never ceases, giving torment till the body is confumed; so when it is translated to an immortal state, it must fignisse as much in that proportion: that [eternal] that [everlasting] hath no end at all; because the soul cannot be killed in the natural sence, but is made miserable and perishing for ever; that is, the worm shall not die so long as the soul shall be unconsumed, the fire shall not be quenched till the period of an immortal nature comes. And that this shall be absolutely for ever without any restriction, appears unanswerable in this, because the same [for ever] that is for the bleffed Souls, the same [for ever] is for the accursed souls : but the bleffed Souls, that die in the Lord, benceforth shall die no more, death hath no power over them; for death is destroyed, it is swallowed up in victory, (faith S. Paul) and there Shall be no more death , faith S. John, Rev. 21.4. So that because for ever hath no end, till the thing or the duration it self have end, in the same sence in which the Saints and Angels give glory to God for ever, in the same sence the lost Souls shall suffer the evils of their fad inheritance: and fince after this death, of Nature, which is a feparation of foul and body, there remains no more death, but this fecond death, this eternal periffing of miserable accursed souls, whose duration must be eternal; it follows that the worm of conscience, and the unquenchable fire of Hell have no period at all, but shall last as long as God lasts, or the measures of a proper Eternity; that they who provoke God to wrath by their base, unreasonable and sottish practices, may know what their portion shall be in the everlasting habitations. And yet suppose that Origen's Opinion had been true, and that accursed souls should have ease and a period to their tortures after a thousand years; I pray, let it be confidered, whether it be not a great madness to chuse the pleasures or the wealth of a few years here, with trouble, with danger, with uncertainty, with labour, with intervals of fickness; and for this to endure the flames of Hell for a thousand years together. The pleasures of the world no man can have for a hundred years, and no man hath pleasure for a hundred days together, but he hath some trouble intervening, or at least a weariness and a loathing of the pleafure: and therefore to endure infufferable calamities (suppose it be) for a hundred years, without any interruption, without fo much comfort as the light of a candle, or a drop of water amounts to in a fever, is a bargain to be made by no man that loves himself, or is not in love with infinite affliction.

If a man were condemned but to lie still or to lie in bed in one posture without turning for seven years together, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate? If a man were to be put upon the Rack for every day for three moneths together, (suppose him able to live so long) what would he do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the King to his face, if he were sure to have both his hands burnt off, and to be tormented with torments three years together? Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pound a year for forty years, if he were sure to be tormented in the fire for the next hundred years together without intermission? Think then what a thousand years signifie; Ten Ages, the age of two Empires: But this account I must tell you is infinitely short, though I thus discourse to you how great fools wicked men are, though this

opinion

opinion should be true. A goodly comfort surely I that for two or three years fortish pleasure, a man shall be infinitely tormented but for a thousand SER M. years. But then when we call up the minutes and years and Ages of Eternity, the consideration it self is a great Hell to those persons who by their evil lives are configned to fuch fad and miferable portions.

A thouland years is a long while to be in torment; we find a Fever of one and twenty days to be like an Age in length: but when the duration of an intolerable mifery is for ever in the height, and for ever beginning, and ten thouland years have spent no part of its term, but it makes a perpetual efflux, and is like the centre of a circle, which ever transmits lines to the circumference; this is a confideration to fad, that the horrour of it and the reflexion upon its abode and duration, make a great part of the Hell: for Hell could not be Hell without the despair of accurred Souls; for any hope were a refreshment; and a drop of water; which would help to allay those flames, which as they burn intolerably, so they must burn for ever.

And I defire you to confider, that although the Scripture uses the word [fire] to express the torments of accursed Souls, yet fire can no more equal the pangs of Hell than it can torment an immaterial substance; the pains of perishing souls being as much more afflictive than the smart of fire, as the smart of fire is troublesome beyond the softness of Persian Carpets, or the sensuality of the Asian Luxury. For the pains of Hell, and the perishing or losing the soul, is, to suffer the wrath of God: ο Θεός ημών πύς χαταναλίσκον, our God is a consuming fire, that is, the fire of Hell. When God takes away all comfort from us, nothing to support our spirit is left us; when forrow is our food, and tears our drink; when it is eternal night without Sun, or Star, or lamp, or fleep; when we burn with fire without light, that is, are loaden with fadness without remedy or hope of eafe; and that this wrath is to be expressed and to fall upon us in spiritual, immaterial, but most accursed, most pungent and dolorous emanations; then we feel what it is to lofe a foul.

We may guess at it by the terrors of a guilty Conscience, those verbera & laniatus, those secret lashings and whips of the exterminating Angel, those thorns in the foul, when a man is haunted by an evil spirit; Those butcheries which the foul of a Tyrant, or a violent or a vicious person, when he falls into fear or any calamity, does feel, are the infinite arguments, that Hell, which is the confummation of the torment of Conscience, just as Manhood is the consummation of Infancy, or as Glory is the perfection of Grace, is an affliction greater than the bulk of Heaven and earth; for there it is that God pours out the treasures of his wrath, and empties the whole magazin of thunder-bolts, and all the armory of God is imployed, not in the chaftifing, but in the tormenting of a perishing soul. Lucian brings in Radamanthus telling the poor wandring fouls upon the banks of Elysum, 'Οπόσα αν τις υμών πονης εξηφονίαι περε το βίον, καθ' έκας το αυτών αφανώ είνωτα όπι το ψυχώς περιφέρι, For every wickedness that any man commits in his life, when he comes to Hell he hath stamped upon his soul an invisible brand and mark of torment, and this begins here, and is not cancelled by death, but there is enlarged by the greatness of infinite, and the aboads of eternity. How great these torments of Conscience are here, let any man imagine that can but understand what despair means; Despair upon just reason: let it be what it will, no misery can be greater than Despair. And because I hope none have sale these horrows of an evil Conscience which are saussessed. here have felt those horrours of an evil Conscience which are confignations to eternity, you may please to learn it by your own reason, or else by

SERM.

the fad instances of story. It is reported of Petrus Ilosuanus, a Polonian School-master, that having read some ill-managed discourses of Absolute Decrees and Divine Reprobation, began to be Phantastick and Melancholick, and apprehensive that he might be one of those many whom God had decreed for Hell from all eternity. From possible to probable, from probable to certain the Temptation foon carried him: and when he once began to believe himself to be a person inevitably perishing, it is not posfible to understand perfectly what infinite fears, and agonies, and despairs, what tremblings, what horrors, what consusion and amazement the poor man felt within him, to consider that he was to be tormented extremely without remedy even to eternal ages. This in a short continuance grew infufferable, and prevailed upon him fo fat, that he hanged himself, and left an account of it to this purpose in writing in his study; I am gone from hence to the flames of Hell, and have forced my way this ther, being impatient to try what those great torments are which here I have feared with an insupportable amazement. This instance may suffice to shew what it is to lose a soul. But I will take off from this sad discourse; only I shall crave your attention to a word of Exhortation.

That you take care, left for the purchase of a little, trifling, inconsiderable portion of the world, you come into this place and state of torment. Although Homer was pleased to complement the beauty of Helena to such a height, as to say it was a sufficient price for all the evils which the

Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years:

Illiad. 7.

Ου νέμεσις Τρώας η έυκνήμιδας Αχαίδς Τοιή δ' άμφὶ γυναικί πολύν χε ένον άλγια πάσχό.

Yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus, that, during the ten years siege of Troy, Helena, for whom the Greeks sought, was in Egypt, not in the City; because it was unimaginable but the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather than for the fake of fuch a trifle have endured fo great calamities. We are more sortish than the Trojans, if we retain our Helena, any one beloved Lust, a painted Devil, any sugar'd temptation, with (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such invaluable losses. And certainly, it's a strange stupidity of spirit that can sleep in the midst of such thunder; when God speaks from Heaven with his loudest voice, and draws aside his curtain, and shews his Arsenal and his armory, full of arrows steeled with wrath, headed and pointed, and hardned with vengeance, still to fnatch at those arrows, if they came but in the retinue of a rich fortune or a vain Mistriss, if they wait but upon pleasure or profit, or in the rear of an ambitious Delign.

But let not us have such a hardiness against the threats and representments of the Divine vengeance, as to take the little imposts and revenues of the world, and stand in defiance against God and the fears of Hell; unless we have a charm that we can be adears To ne To, invisible to the Judge of Heaven and Earth, and are impregnable against, or are sure we shall be insensible of, the miseries of a perishing Soul.

There is a fort of men, who, because they will be vicious and Atheistical in their lives, have no way to go on with any plaisance and without huge disturbances, but by being also Atheistical in their opinions, and to believe that the story of Hell is but a bug-bear to affright children and fools, easie-believing people, to make them soft and apt for Government and designs of Princes. And this is an opinion that befriends none but impure and vicious persons. Others there are, that believe God to be all

Mercy, that he forgets his Justice, believing that none shall perish with so sad a ruine, if they do but at their death bed ask God forgiveness, and say they are sorry; but yet continue their impicty till their house be ready to sall: being like the Circassans, whose Gentlemen enter not in the Church, till they be threescore years old, that is, in effect, till by their age they cannot any longer use rapine; till then they hear Service at their windows, dividing unequally their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to Robbery, and their old age to a Repentance without restitution.



Our youth, and our manhood and old age, are all of them due to God, and Justice and Mercy are to him equally essential; and as this life is a time of the possibilities of Mercy, so to them that neglect it, the next

world shall be a state of pure and unmingled Justice.

Remember the fatal and decretory fentence which God hath paffed upon all mankind, It is appointed to all men once to die, and after death comes Judgment.] And if any of us were certain to die next morning, with what earnestness should we pray? with what hatred should we remember our fins? with what forn should we look upon the licentious pleasures of the world? Then nothing could be welcome unto us but a Prayer-Book, no company but a Comforter and a Guide of fouls, no imployment but Repentance, no passions but in order to Religion, no kindness for a Lust that hath undone us. And if any of you have been arrested with alarms of death, or been in hearty fear of its approach, remember what thoughts and defigns then poffeffed you, how precious a foul was then in your account, and what then you would give that you had despised the world, and done your duty to God and man, and lived a holy life. It will come to that again, and we shall be in that condition in which we shall perfectly understand, that all the things and pleasures of the world are vain and unprofitable and irkfom, and that he only is a wife man who fecures the interest of his soul, though it be with the loss of all this world, and his own Life into the bargain. When we are to depart this life, to go to strange company and stranger places, and to an unknown condition, then a holy Conscience will be the best security, the best possession; it will be a horrour, that every friend we meet shall with triumph upbraid to us the sottishness of our folly : Lo, this is the goodly change you have made; Tou had your good things in your life-time, and how like you the portion that is reserved to you for ever? The old Rabbins, those Poets of Religion, report of Moses, that when the Courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the child Moses, in the chamber of Pharaoh's Daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand, and a coal of fire in the other; and that the Child matched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so findged and parched his tongue, that he stammered ever after. And certainly it is infinitely more childish in us, for the glittering of the small gloworms and the char-coal of worldly possessions, to swallow the slames of Hell greedily in our choice: such a bit will produce a worse stammering than Moses had: for so the accursed and lost Souls have their ugly and horrid dialect, they roar and blaspheme, blaspheme and roar for ever. And suppose God should now at this instant send the great Archangel with his trumpet to summon all the world to Judgment; would not all this seem a notorious visible truth, a truth which you will then wonder that every man did not lay to his heart, and preserve there in actual pious and effective confideration? Let the Trumpet of God perpetually found in your ears, Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium: place your selves by meditation every day upon your Death-bed, and remember what thoughts



shall then possess you; and let such thoughts dwell in your understanding SERM, for ever, and be the parent of all your resolutions and actions. The Doctors of the Jews report, that when Absalom hanged among the oaks by the hair of the head, he seemed to see under him Hell gaping wide ready to receive him; and he durst not cut off the hair that intangled him, for fear he should fall into the horrid Lake whose portion is slames and torment, but chose to protract his miserable life a few minutes in that pain of posture, and to abide the stroke of his pursuing enemies: His condition was sad when his arts of remedy were so vain.

> Τί 30 βεσίων αν σου κακοίς μεμιγρικόν Θυήστειν ο μέλλων το χρόνο πέρδος φέρει, Sopb.

A condemned man hath but small comfort to stay the singing of a long Psalm: it is the case of every vicious person. Hell is wide open to every impenitent persevering sinner, to every unpurged person.

Noctes atque dies patet atri Janua Ditis.

And although God hath lighted his candle, and the lantern of his Word and clearest revelations is held out to us, that we can see Hell in its worst colours and most horrid representments; yet we run greedily after baubles into that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then only we begin to consider, when all consideration is fruit-

He therefore is a huge fool that heaps up riches, that greedily pursues the world, and at the same time (for so it must be) heaps up wrath to himself against the day of wrath; when sickness and death arrests him, then they appear unprofitable, and himself extremely miserable: and if you would know how great that misery is, you may take account of it by those fearful words and killing Rhetorick of Scripture, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and, Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings? That is, No patience can abide there one hour, where they must dwell for ever.

Sermon

SERM: XX.

Sermon XX.

OF

CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE.

Matth. 10. latter part of Verle 16.

Be ye therefore wife as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.



Hen our Blessed Saviour entailed a Law and a condition of Sufferings, and promised a state of Persecution to his servants; and withal had charmed them with the bands and unactive chains of so many passive Graces, that they should not be able to stir against the violence of Tyrants, or abate the edge of axes, by any instrument but their

own blood; being fent forth as sheep among wolver, innocent and silent, harmless and defenceless, certainly exposed to forrow, and uncertainly guarded in their persons; their condition seemed nothing else but a defignation to flaughter: and when they were drawn into the folds of the Church, they were betrayed into the hands of evil men, infinitely and unavoidably: and when an Apoltle invited a Profelyte to come to Christ, it was in effect a mare laid for his life, and he could neither conceal his Religion, nor hide his person, nor avoid a captious question, nor deny his accusation, nor elude the bloody arts of Prators and Informers, nor break prisons, nor any thing but die. If the case stood just thus, it was well Eternity flood at the outer days of our life, ready to receive fuch harmless people : but furely there could be no art in the delign, no pitying of humane weaknesses, no complying with the condition of man, no allowances made for customs and prejudices of the world, no inviting men by the things of men, no turning Nature into Religion; but it was all the way a direct violence, and an open profitution of our lives, and a throwing away our fortune into a fea of rashness and credulity. But therefore God ordered the affairs and necessities of Religion in other ways, and to other purposes. Although God bound our hands behind us, yet he did not tie our Understandings up : although we might not use our fwords, yet we might use our feason : we were not suffered to be violent, but we might avoid violence by all the arts of prudence and innocence: if we did take heed of fin, we might also take heed of men. And because in all contentions between wit and violence, prudence and rudeness, learning and the sword, the strong hand took it first, and the strong head possessed it last; the strong man first governed; and the witty man succeeded him and lasted longer: it came to pass that the wildom of the Father hath so ordered it, that all his Disciples should overcome the power of the Roman Legions by a wife Religion; and prudence and innocence should become the mightiest guards; and the Christian, although exposed to persecution, yet is so secured that he shall never need to die, but when the circumstances are so ordered that his Reason is convinced

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that then it is fit he should; fit (I say) in order to God's purposes and his

For he that is innovent is fafe against all the rods and the axes of all the Consuls of the world if they rule by Justice; and he that is prudent will also escape from many rudenesses and irregular violences that can come by Injustice: and no wit of man, no government, no armies can do more. For Cefar perished in the midst of all his Legions and all his honours; and against chance and irregularities there is no provision less than infinite that can give security. And although Prudence alone cannot do this; yet Innocence gives the greatest title to that providence which only can, if he pleases, and will, if it be fitting. Here then are the two arms defensive of a Christian: Prudence against the evils of men, Innocence a-

gainst the evils of Devils and all that relates to his kingdom. Prudence fences against Persecution and the evil snares, against the opportunities and occasions of sin, it prevents surprizes, it fortifies all its proper weaknesses, it improves our talents, it does advantage to the Kingdom of Christ and the interest of the Gospel, it secures our condition, and instructs our choice in all the ways and just passages to felicity, it makes us to live profitably and die wisely; and without it, simplicity would turn to filliness, zeal into passion, passion into sury, Religion into scandal, conversation into a snare, civilities into temptation, courtelies into danger; and an imprudent person falls into a condition of harmless rich and unwary Fools, or rather of Birds, Sheep and Bevers, who are hunted and perfecuted for the spoils of their fleece or their flesh, their skins or their entrails, and have not the forelight to avoid a snare, but by their sear and undesending sollies are driven thither where they die infallibly. snawing modders is sooply should be reflect, and the decency of his soul and spirit shall be discomposed, and turned into a heap of inarticulate and disorderly fansies, unless by the methods and guards of Prudence it be managed and secured.

But in order to the following discourse and its method, we are first to confider whether this be, or indeed can be, a commandment, or what is it. For can all men that give up their names in Baptism be enjoyned to be wife and prudent? It is as if God would command us to be eloquent or witty men, fine speakers, or strait-bodied, or excellent scholars, or rich men: if he please to make us so, we are so. And Prudence is a gift of God, a bleffing of an excellent nature, and of great leifure, and a wife opportunity, and a fevere education, and a great experience, and a strict observation, and good company; all which being either wholly or in part out of our power, may be expected as free gifts, but cannot be imposed as commandments.

To this I answer, That Christian Prudence is in very many instances a direct duty; in some an instance and advice, in order to degrees and advantages. Where it is a Duty, it is put into every mans power; where it is an Advice, it is only expected according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not : and even here, although the events of Prudence are out of our power, yet the endeavours and the obfervation, the diligence and caution, the moral part of it, and the plain conduct of our necessary duty, (which are portions of this Grace) are fuch things which God will demand in proportion to the talent which he hath intrusted into our Banks. There are indeed some Christians very unwary and unwife in the conduct of their Religion, and they cannot all help it, at least not in all degrees; but yet they may be taught to do pru-

dent things, though not to be prudent persons : If they have not the prudence of Advice and Conduct, yet they may have the Prudence of Obedience and SER M. And the event is this ; without Prudence their Virtue is unfafe, and their persons defenceless, and their interest is unguarded; for Prudence is a handmaid waiting at the production and birth of Vertue; it is a nurse to it in its infancy, its patron in assaults, its guide in temptations, its security in all portions of chance and contingencies: And he that is imprudent, if he have marly accidents and varieties, is in great danger of being none at all, or, if he be, at the best he is but a weak and an unprositable servant, useless to his neighbour, vain in himself, and as to God, the least in the Kingdom : his Vertue is contingent and by chance, not proportioned to the reward of wildom, and the election of a wife Religion.



Degrolag soliv arteamors tou . Kied & hater andvor solving dops!

No purchase, no wealth, no advantage is great enough to be compared to a wife foul and a prudent spirit; and he that wants it, bath a less Vertue, and a defenceless mind, and will fuffer a mighty hazard in the interest of Eternity. Its parts and proper acts confist in the following parti-

1. It is the duty of Christian Prudence to chuse the End of a Christian, that which is perfective of a Man, fatisfactory to Reason, the rest of a Christian, and the beatification of his spirit; and that is, To chuse and defire, and propound to himself Heaven, and the fruition of God, as the end of all his acts and arts, his designs and purposes. For, in the nature of things, that is most digible and most to be pursued, which is most perfective of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the fatisfaction, and professive of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the fatisfaction, and proper rest of our most reasonable appetited. Now the things of this world are difficult and unease; fall of thoms and empty of pleasures; they fill a difeafed faculty or an abused sensel but are an infinite diffatisfaction to Reason and the appetites of the Soul; they are fliori and transient, and they never abide; males forrow like a chain be bound about their leg, and then they never fir till the grace of God and Religion breaks it, or else that the rult of time eats the chain in pieces; they are dangerous and doubtful, few and difficult, fordid and particular, not only not communicable to a multitude, but not diffusive upon the whole man, there being no one pleasure or object in this world that delights all the parts of man: and after all this, they are originally from earth and from the creatures, only that they oftentimes contract alliances with Hell and the grave, with shame and sorrow; and all these put together make no great amability, or proportion to a wise man's choice. But, on the other side, the things of God are the noblest satisfactions to those delires which ought to be cherished and swelled up to infinite; their deliciousness is valt and full of relish; and their very appendant thorns are to be cholen, for they are gilded, they are lafe and medicinal, they heal the wound, they make, and bring forth fruit of a biefled and a holy life. The things of God and of Religion are easie and sweet, they bear entertainments in their hand, and reward at their back otheir good is certain and perpetual, and they make us chearful to day, and pleasant to morrow; and Spiritual Songs end not in a figh and a groan; neither, like unwholelome Phy-fick do they let loofe a prefent humour, and introduce an habitual indifpolition; but they bring us to the felicity of God, the fame yesterday, and to day, and for ever's they do not give a private and particular delight, but



their benefit is publick, like the incense of the Altar, it sends up a sweet smell to Heaven, and makes attonement for the Religious man that kindled it, and delights all the standers by, and makes the very air wholsome. There is no blessed soul goes to Heaven, but he makes a general joy in all the mansions where the saints do dwell, and in all the Chappels where the Angels sing: and the joys of Religion are not univocal, but productive of rare and accidental and preternatural pleasures; for the musick of holy hymns delights the ear, and refreshes the spirit, and makes the very bones of the Saint to rejoyce. And Charity, or the giving alms to the poor, does not only ease the poverty of the receiver; but makes the giver rich, and heals his sickness, and delivers from death: and Temperance, though it be in the matter of meat and drink and pleasures; yet hath an effect upon the Understanding, and makes the Reason sober, and the Will orderly, and the Assections regular, and does thing beside and beyond their natural and proper efficacy: for all the parts of our duty are watered with the showrs of blessing, and bring forth fruit according to the influence of Heaven, and beyond the capacities of nature.

And now let the Voluptuous person go and try whether putting his wanton hand to the bosom of his Mistress will get half such honour as Scavola put upon his head, when he put his hand into the fire. Let him fee whether a Drunken meeting will cure a Fever, or make him wife: (A hearty and persevering Prayer will.) Let him tell me, if spending great fums of money upon his Lufts will make him fleep foundly, or be rich : Charity will ; Alms will increase his fortune , and a good Confeience shall charm all his cares and forrows into a most delicions slumber. Well may a full goblet wet the Drunkard's tongue, and then the heat riling from the stomach will drie the spunge, and heat it into the scorchings and little images of Hellsand the sollies of a wanton bed will turn the itch into a smart, and empty the reins of all their hissful powers: but can they do honour or satisfaction in any thing that must last, and that ought to be provided for? No: All the things of this world are little, and trifling, and limited, and particular, and fometimes necessary because men are miserable, wanting and imperfect; but effey never do any thing toward perfection, but their pleasure dies like the time in which it danced a while; and when the minute is gone, fo is the pleafure too, and leaves no footstep but the impression of a figh, and dwells no-where but in the same house where you shall find yesterday, that is, in forgetfulness and annihilation; unless its only child, sorrow, shall marry, and breed more of its kind, and so continue its memory and name to eternal ages. It is therefore the most necessary part of Prudence to chuse well in the main stake; and the dispute is not much: for if eternal things be better than temporal, the Soul more noble than the Body, Vertue more honourable than the halest Vices, a lasting joy to be chosen before an eternal forrow, much to be preferred before little, certainty before danger, publick good things before private evils, Eternity before moments; then let us fit down in Religion, and make Heaven to be our End, God to be our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Holy Chost the earnest of our inheritance, Vertue to be our imployment; and then we hall never enter into the portion of fools and accursed ill-chusing spirits. Nutrianzen said well, Malim Prudentia gustam qu'am facandioris forsimie pelague; One drop of Prudence is more useful than an ocean of a smooth fortune: for Prudence is a rare instrument towards Heaven; and a great Fortune is made oftentimes the High-way to Hell and destruction. However, thus far Prudence is our duty; every man can be so wise, and is bound to

it, to chuse Heaven and a cohabitation with God, before the possessions and transient vanities of the world.

2. It is a duty of Christian Prudence to pursue this great End with apt Means and instruments in proportion to that End. No wise man will fail to Ormus in a Cock-boat, or use a child for his interpreter 5 and that General is a Cyclops without an eye, who chuses the sickest men to man his Towns, and the weakest to fight his Battels. It cannot be a vigorous profecution, unless the means have an efficacy or worth commensurate to all the difficulty, and something of the excellency of that end which is designed. And indeed men use not to be so weak in acquiring the possessions of their temporals; but in matters of Religion they think any thing effective enough to secure the greatest Interest: as if all the fields of Heaven and the regions of that Kingdom were waste ground, and wanted a Colony of Planters; and that God invited men to Heaven upon any terms, that he might rejoyce in the multitude of Subjects. For certain it is, men do more to get a little money than for all the glories of Heaven: Men rife up early, and fit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, to become richer than their neighbours; and are amazed at every loss; and impatient of an evil accident, and feel a direct storm of Passion if they suffer in their interest. But in order to Heaven they are cold in their Religion, indevout in their Prayers, incurious in their walking, unwatchful in their circumstances, indifferent in the use of their opportunities, infrequent in their discoursings of it, not inquisitive of the way, and yet think they shall furely go to Heaven. But a prudent man knows; that by the greatness of the purchase he is to make an estimate of the value and the price. When we ask of God any great thing, as Wisdom, delivery from sickness, his holy spirit, the forgiveness of sins, the grace of Chastity, restitution to his favour, or the like, do we hope to obtain them without a high opinion of the things we ask? and if we value them highly, must we not desire them earnestly? and if we desire them earnestly, must we not beg for them fervently? and whatsoever we ask for fervently, must not we beg for frequently? And then, because Prayer is but one hand toward the reaching a bleffing, and God requires our co-operation and endeavour, and we must work with both hands; are we not convinced that our prayers are either faint, or a delign of laziness, when we either ask coldly or else pray loudly hoping to receive the graces we need without labour? A prudent person, that knows to value the best object of his defires, will also know that he must observe the degrees of labour, according to the excellency of the reward: That Prayer must be effectual, fervent, frequent, continual, holy, passionate, that must get a grace, or secure a bleffing: The Love that we must have to God must be such as to keep his Commandements, and make us willing to part with all our estate; and all our honour, and our life for the testimony of a holy Conscience ! Our Charity to our Neighbour must be expressive in a language of a real friendship, aptness to forgive, readiness to forbear, in pitying infirmities, in relieving necessities, in giving our goods and our lives, and quitting our privileges to save his Soul, to secure and support his Vertue: Our Repentance must be full of sorrows and care, of diligence and hatred against fin; it must drive out all, and leave no affections towards it; it mult be constant and persevering, fearful of Relapse, and watchful of all accidents: Our Temperance must sometimes turn into abstinence, and most commonly be severe, and ever without reproof: He that striveth for masteries is temperate (saith Saint Paul) in all things. He that does all this, may with some pretence and reason say, he intends to

But they that will not deny a lust, nor refrain an appego to Heaven. SERM. tite; they that will be drunk when their friends do merrily constrain them, or love a cheap Religion, and a gentle and lame Prayer, short and soft, quickly faid and foon passed over, seldom returning and but little ob-ferved; how is it possible that they should think themselves persons disposed to receive such glorious Crowns and Scepters, such excellent conditions, which they have not faith enough to believe, nor attention enough to consider, and no man can have wit enough to understand? But so might an Arcadian Shepherd look from the rocks, or through the clifts of the valley where his sheep graze, and wonder that the messenger stays so long from coming to him to be crowned King of all the Greek Islands, or to be adopted Heir to the Macedonian Monarchy. It is an infinite love of God that we have Heaven upon conditions which we can perform with greatest diligence: But truly the lives of men are generally fuch, that they do things in order to Heaven, things (I fay) fo few, fo trifling, so unworthy, that they are not proportionable to the reward of a crown of oak or a yellow ribband, the slender reward with which the Romans paid their fouldiers for their extraordinary valour. True it is, that Heaven is not in a just sence of a commutation a reward, but a gift, and an infinite favour: but yet it is not reached forth but to persons disposed by the conditions of God; which conditions when we pursue in kind, let us be very careful we do not fail of the mighty prize of our high calling for want of degrees and just measures, the measures of zeal and a

3. It is an office of Prudence to ferve God fo that we may at the same time preserve our lives and our estates, our interest and reputation for our selves and our relatives, so far as they can consist together. S. Paul in the beginning of Christianity was careful to instruct the forwardness and zeal of the new Christians into good husbandry, and to cate-chize the men into good trades, and the women into useful imployments, that they might not be unprofitable. For Christian Religion carrying us to Heaven, does it by the way of a man, and by the body it serves the Soul, as by the foul it serves God; and therefore it endeavours to secure the Body and its interest, that it may continue the opportunities of a Crown, and prolong the stage in which we are to run for the mighty prize of our salvation: and this is that part of Prudence which is the defensative and guard of a Christian in the time of persecution; and it hath in it much of duty. He that through an indifcreet zeal casts himself into a needless danger, hath betrayed his life to Tyranny, and tempts the fin of an enemy; he loses to God the service of many years, and cuts off himself from a fair opportunity of working his salvation, (in the main parts of which we shall find a long life and very many years, of Reason to be little enough;) he betrays the interest of his relatives, which he is bound to preferve; he disables himself of making provision for them of his own house, and he that fails in this duty by his own fault is worse than an infidel; and denies the faith, by such unseasonable dying or being undone, which by that testimony he did intend glorioufly to confess; he serves the end of ambition and popular services, but not the sober ends of Religion; he discourages the weak, and weakens the hands of the strong, and by upbraiding their weariness, tempts them to turn it into rashness or despair; he affrights strangers from entering into Religion, while by such imprudence he shall represent it to be impossible at the same time to be wise and to be religious; he turns all the whole Religion into a forwardness of dying or beggery, leaving

no space for the parts and offices of a holy life, which in times of persecution are infinitely necessary for the advantages of the institution. But SERM. God hath provided better things for his servants; Quem fata cogunt, ille cum venia est miser; He whom God by an inevitable necessity calls to sufferance, he hath leave to be undone; and that ruine of his estate or loss of his life shall secure first a providence, then a crown.

> At fi quis ultro fe malis offert volens, Seque ipfe torquet, perdere est dignus bona Queis nescit uti-

But he that invites the cruelty of a Tyrant by his own follies, or the indiscretions of an unsignificant and impertinent zeal, suffers as a wilful person, and enters into the portion and reward of fools. And this is the precept of our Blessed Saviour, next after my Text, Beware of men; Use your Prudence to the purposes of avoiding their snare, in Snew Bestis μάλλον ανήμερος. Man is the most barmful of all the wild beasts. Te are sent as sheep among wolves; be therefore wise as serpents: when you can avoid it, fuffer not men to ride over your beads, or trample you under foot; that's the wildom of Serpents. And so must we; that is, by all just compliances, and toleration of all indifferent changes in which a duty is not destroyed, and in which we are not active, so preserve our selves, that we might be permitted to live, and serve God, and to do advantages to Religion; so purchasing time to do good in, by bending in all those slexures of fortune and condition which we cannot help, and which we do not fet forward, and which we never did procure. And this is the direct meaning of S. Paul; See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as Eph. 5.15, 16. wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil: That is, we are fallen into Times that are troublesome, dangerous, persecuting, and afflictive; purchase as much respite as you can; buy or redeem the time by all honest arts, by humility, by fair carriage and sweetnesses of society, by civility and a peaceful conversation, by good words and all honest offices, by praying for your persecutors, by patient sufferance of what is unavoidable : And when the Tyrant draws you forth from all these guards and retirements, and offers violence to your duty, or tempts you to do a dishonest act, or to omit an act of obligation; then come forth into the Theatre, and lay your. necks down to the hang-mans axe, and fear not to die the most shameful death of the Cross or the gallows. For so have I known Angels ascending and descending upon those ladders: and the Lord of glory suffered shame and purchased honour upon the Cross. Thus we are to walk in wisdom to- Col. 4.5. wards them that are without, redeeming the time : for so S. Paul renews that permission of commandment: Give them no just cause of offence; with all humility and as occasion is offered represent their duty, and invite them sweetly to selicities and Vertue, but do not in ruder language upbraid and reproach their baseness; and when they are incorrigible, let them alone, lest like Cats they run mad with the smell of delicious ointments. And therefore Pothinus Bilhop of Lions being asked by the unbaptized Prelident, Who was the God of Christians? answered id is a fine years, If you be disposed with real and hearty desires of learning, what you ask you shall quickly know; but if your purpose be indirect, I shall not preach to you, to my hurt, and your no advantage. Thus the wildom of the primitive Christians was careful not to prophane the Temples of the Heathen, not to revile their falle Gods; and when they were in duty to reprehend the follies of their Religion, they chose to do it from their own Writings, and as relators of their own records: they fled from the fury

SERM. XIX. of a Persecution, they hid themselves in caves, and wandred about in disguises, and preached in private, and celebrated their Synaxes and Communions in grots and retirements; and made it appear to all the world they were peaceable and obedient, charitable and patient, and at this price bought their time;

Kaleis & Gorne and edon

As knowing that even in this sence time was very precious, and the op-portunity of giving glory to God by the offices of an excellent Religion was not too dear a purchase at that rate. But then when the wolves had entered into the folds, and seized upon a lamb, the rest sled, and used all the innocent arts of concealment. Saint Athanasius being over-taken by his Persecutors, but not known, and asked whether he saw Athanasius passing that way, pointed out forward with his singer, Non longe abest Athanasius, The man is not far off, a swift footman will easily overtake him. And Saint Paul divided the councel of his Judges, and made the Pharisees his parties by a witty infinuation of his own belief of the Refuseation. furrection, which was not the main question, but an incident to the matter of his Accusation. And when Plinius Secundus in the face of a Tyrant-court was pressed so invidiously to give his opinion concerning a good man in banishment, and under the disadvantage of an unjust sentence, he diverted the share of Marcus Regulus, by referring his answer to a competent Judicatory according to the Laws; being pressed again, by offering a direct answer upon a just condition, which he knew they would not accept; and the third time, by turning the envy upon the impertinent and malicious Orator: that he won great honour, the honour of a fevere honesty, and a witty man, and a prudent person. The thing I have noted, because it is a good pattern to represent the arts of honest evalion, and religious, prudent honesty; which any good man may transcribe and turn into his own instances, if any equal case should occurr.

For in this cause the rule is easie; if we are commanded to be wise and redeem our time, that we serve God and Religion, we must not use un-Jawful arts which set us back in the accounts of our time, no lying Subtersuges, no betraying of a truth, no treachery to a good man, no infinaring of a brother, no secret renouncing of any part or proposition of our Religion, no denying to consess the article when we are called to it. For when the primitive Christians had got a trick to give money for Certificates that they had sacrificed to Idols, though indeed they did not do it, but had corrupted the Officers and Ministers of State, they dishonoured their Religion, and were marked with the appellative of Libellatici, Libellers; and were excommunicate and cast off from the society of Christians and the hopes of Heaven, till they had returned to God by a severe Repentance. Optandum est, ut, quod libenter facis, diu facere possis; It is good to have time long to do that which we ought to do: but to pretend that which we dare not do, and to say we have when we have not, if we know we ought not, is to dishonour the cause and the person too; it is expressly against confession of Christ, of which Saint Paul saith, By the mouth, Confession is made unto Salvation; and our blessed Saviour, He that confesses me fore men, I will confess him before my Heavenly Father; and if here he resulted to own me, I will not own him hereafter. It is also expressly against

against Christian fortitude and nobleness, and against the simplicity and fincerity of our Religion, and it turns Prudence into craft, and brings SERM, the Devil to wait in the Temple, and to minister to God; and it is a XXI leffer kind of Apostasie. And it is well that the man is tempted no farther: for if the Persecutors could not be corrupted with money, it is odds but the complying man would; and though he would with the money hide his shame, yet he will not with the loss of all his Estate redeem his Religion. Αυπηρώς δι έχε , εί τοις εμαυτής & βίον σόζω καποίς. Some men will lose their lives, rather than a fair Estate : and do not almost all the Armies of the world (I mean those that fight in the justest causes) pretend to fight and die for their lands and liberties? and there are too many also that will die twice, rather than be beggers once; although we all know that the second death is intollerable. Christian Prudence forbids us to provoke a danger: and they were fond persons that ran to Persecution, and when the Proconsul sate on the life and death, and made strict inquisition after Christians, went and offered themselves to die; and he was a fool that being in Portugal ran to the Priest as he elevated the Hoft, and overthrew the mysteries, and openly defied the rites of that Religion. God when he fends a perfecution will pick out such persons whom he will have to die, and whom he will confign to banishment, and whom to poverty. In the mean time, let us do our duty when we can, and as long as we can, and with as much strictness as we can; walking aneicas (as the Apostle's phrase is) not prevaricating in the least tittle: and then if we can be safe with the arts of civil, innocent, inoffensive compliance, let us bless God for his permissions made to us, and his affiltances in the using them. But if either we turn our zeal into the ambition of death, and the follies of an unnecessary beggery; or on the other fide turn our Prudence into Craft and Covetouines; to the first I say, that God hath no pleasure in fools; to the later, If you gain the whole world, and lose your own Soul, your loss is infinite and intolerable.



SERMON XXI.

PART II.

T is the office of Christian Prudence, so to order the affairs of our life, as that in all the offices of our fouls and conversation, we do honour and reputation to the Religion we profess. For the follies and vices of the Professors give great advantages to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and do aliene the hearts, and hinder the compliance of those undetermined persons, who are apt to be perswaded if their understandings be not prejudiced.

But as our necessary duty is bound upon us by one ligament more in order to the honour of the cause of God; soit particularly binds us to many circumstances, adjuncts and parts of duty, which have no other commandment but the law of Prudence. There are some Sects of Christians

SERM. XXI. which have some one constant indisposition, which as a Character divides them from all others, and makes them reproved on all hands. Some are fo suspicious and ill-natured, that if a person of a facile nature and gentle disposition fall into their hands, he is presently sowred and made mo-rose, unpleasant and uneasse in his conversation. Others there are that do things fo like to what themselves condemn, that they are forced to take fanctuary and labour in the mime of unfignificant distinctions, to make themselves believe they are innocent: and in the mean time they offend all men elfe, and open the mouths of their adversaries to speak reproachful things, true or falle, (as it happens.) And it requires a great wit to understand all the distinctions and devices thought of for legitimating the worshipping of Images: And those people that are liberal in their Excommunications make men think they have reason to say, their Judges are proud, or felf-willed, or covetous, or ill-natured peo-These that are the faults of Governours and continued, are quickly derived upon the Sect, and cause a disreputation to the whole Society and Institution. And who can think that Congregation to be a true branch of the Christian, which makes it their profession to kill men to save their souls against their will, and against their understanding? who calling themselves Disciples of so meek a Master, do live like Bears upon prey, and spoil, and blood? It is a huge dishonour to the sincerity of a man's purposes to be too busie in fingring money in the matters of Religion: and they that are zealous for their rights, and tame in their Devotion, furious against Sacrilege, and companions of Drunkards, implacable against breakers of a Canon, and careless and patient enough with them that break the fifth or fixth Commandments of the Decalogue, tell all the world their private sence is to preserve their own interest with scruple and curiosity, and leave God to take care for his.

Thus Christ reproved the Pharisees for straining at a Gnat, and smallowing a Camel; the very representation of the manner and matter of fact discovers the vice by reproving the folly of it. They that are factious to get a rich Proselyte, and think the poor not worth faving, dishonour their zeal, and teach men to call it Covetousness: and though there may be a reason of prudence to desire one more than the other, because of a bigger efficacy the example of the one may have more than the other; yet it will quickly be discovered, if it be done by secular design; and the Scripture, that did not allow the preferring of a gay man before a poor Saint in the matter of place, will not be pleased that in the matter of Souls, which are all equal, there should be a faction and design; and an acceptation of persons. Never let sins pollute our Religion with arts of the world, nor offer to support the Ark with unhallowed hands, nor mingle false propositions with true, nor make Religion a pretence to profit or preferment, nor do things which are like a Vice; neither ever speak things dishonourable of God, nor abuse thy brother for God's fake, nor be folicitous and over-busie to recover thy own little things, neither alway think it fit to lose thy Charity by forcing thy brother to do Justice; and all those things which are the outsides and faces, the garments and most discerned parts of Religion, be sure that they be dressed according to all the circumstances of men, and by all the rules of common honesty and publick reputation. Is it not a sad thing that the Jew should say, the Christians worship Images? or that it should become a proverb, that the Jew spends all in his Passover, the Moor in his Marriage, and the Christian in his Law-suits? that what the first sacrifice to Religion,

gion, and the second to publick Joy, we should spend in Malice, Cove-tousness, and Revenge?

SERM. XXI.

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis Et dici potnisse, & non potnisse refelli.

But among our felves also we serve the Devil's ends, and minister to an eternal distunion, by saying and doing things which look unhandsomely. One fort of men is superstitious, phantastical, greedy of honour, and tenacious of propositions to fill the purse, and his Religion is thought nothing but Policy and Opinion. Another says, he hath a good Religion, but he is the most indifferent and cold person in the world either to maintain it, or to live according to it. The one dresses the Images of Saints with fine cloaths; the other lets the Poor go naked, and disrobes the Priests that minister in the Religion. A third uses God worse than all this, and says of him such things that are scandalous even to an honest man, and such which would undo a good man's reputation. And a fourth yet, endures no Governour but himself, and pretends to set up Christ, and make himself his Lieutenant. And a fifth hates all Government. And from all this it comes to pass that it is hard for a man to chuse his side; and he that chuses wisest, takes that which hath in it least hurt; but some he must endure, or live without communion: and every Church of one denomination is, or hath been, too incurious of prevent-

ing infamy or difreputation to their Confessions.

One thing I defire should be observed, That here the Question being concerning Prudence, and the matter of doing reputation to our Religion, it is not enough to fay, we can with Learning justifie all that we do, and make all whole with 3 or 4 Distinctions: for possibly that man that went to visit the Corinthian Lais, if he had been asked why he dishonoured himself with so unhandsome an entrance, might find an excuse to legitimate his act, or at least to make himself believe well of his own person; but he that intends to do himself honour, must take care that he be not suspected, that he give no occasion of reproachful language; for Fame and Honour is a nice thing, tender as a woman's chastity, or like the face of the purest mirrour, which a foul breath, or an unwholesome air, or a watry eye can fully, and the beauty is lost although it be not dashed in pieces. When a Man, or a Sect, is put to answer for themselves in the matter of reputation, they with their distinctions wipe the glass, and at last can do nothing but make it appear it was not broken; but their very abstersion and laborious excuses confess it was foul and faulty. We must know that all forts of men and all sects of Christians, have not only the mistakes of men and their prejudices to contest withall, but the calumnies and aggravation of Devils: and therefore it will much ease our account of Dooms-day, if we are now so prudent that men will not be offended here, nor the Devils furnished with a libel in the day of our great Account.

To this Rule appertains, that we be curious in observing the circumstances of men, and satisfying all their reasonable expectations, and doing things at that rate of Charity and Religion which they are taught to be prescribed in the Institution. There are some things which are undecencies rather than sins, such which may become a just Heathen, but not a holy Christian; a man of the world, but not a man professing godliness: Because when the greatness of the Man, or the excellency of the Law, hath engaged us upon great Severity or an exemplar Vertue; whatsoever is less than it, renders the man unworthy of the Religion, or

XXI.

the Religion unworthy its fame; Men think themselves abused, and SERM. therefore return shame for payment. We never read of an Apostle that went to Law; and it is but reasonable to expect that of all men in the world Christians should not be such fighting people, and Clergy-men should not command Armies, and Kings should not be drunk, and subjects should not strike Princes for Justice, and an old man should not be youthful in talk or in his habit, and women should not swear, and great men should not lie, and a poor man should not oppress: for, besides the fin of them, there is an undecency in all of them; and by being contrary to the end of an office, or to the reputation of a state, or the fobrieties of a graver or sublimed person, they asperse the religion as infufficient to keep the persons within the bounds of same and common re-

But above all things, those Sects of Christians whose professed Doctrine brings destruction and diminution to Government, give the most intolerable scandal and dishonour to the Institution; and it had been impossible that Christianity should have prevailed over the wisdom and power of the Greeks and Romans, if it had not been humble to Superiors, patient of injuries, charitable to the needy, a great exacter of Obedience to Kings, even to Heathens, that they might be won and convinced; and to Perjecutors that they might be sweetned in their anger, or up-braided for their cruel injustice: for so doth the humble Vine creep at the foot of an Oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the leaste Nation. Religion of it self is soft, easie and defenceless, and God hath made it grow up with Empires and lean upon the arms of Kings, and it cannot well grow alone; and if it shall like the Ivy, suck the heart of the Oak, upon whose body it grew and was supported, it will be pulled down from its usurped eminence, and fire and shame shall be its portion. We cannot complain if Princes arm against those Christians, who, if they were suffered to preach, will disarm the Princes; and it will be hard to perswade that Kings are bound to protect and nourish those that will prove ministers of their own exauctoration: And no Prince can have juster reason to forbid, nor any man have greater reason to deny communion to a Family, than when they go about to destroy the power of the one, or corrupt the duty of the other. The particulars of this Rule are very many: I shall only instance in one more, because it is of great Concernment to the publick interest of Christendom.

There are some persons whose Religion is hugely disgraced, because they change their propositions according as their temporal necessities or advantages do return. They that in their weakness and beginning cry out against all violence as against Persecution, and from being Sufferers swell up till they be prosperous, and from thence to power, and at last to Tyranny, and then suffer none but themselves, and trip up those feet which they humbly kissed, that themselves should not be trampled upon; these men tell all the world that at first they were pusillanimous, or at last outrageous; that there Doctrine at first served their fear, and at last served their rage, and that they did not at all intend to serve God: and then who shall believe them in any thing else? Thus fome men declaim against the faults of Governours, that themselves may govern; and when the power is in their hands, what was a fault in

others,

others, is in them necessity; as if a fin could be hallowed for coming into their hands. Some Greeks , at Florence subscribed the Article of Purga- SER M. tory, and condemned it in their own Diocesses: And the King's Supremacy in causes Ecclesiastical was earnestly defended against the pretences of the Bishop of Rome ; and yet when he was thrust out, some men were, and are, violent to submit the King to their Consistories; as if he were Supreme in defiance of the Pope, and yet not Supreme over his own Clergy. These Articles are managed too suspiciously.

Omnia si perdas, famam servare memento.

You lose all the advantages to your cause, if you lose your reputation. 5. It is a duty also of Christian Prudence, that the Teachers of others by Authority, or reprovers of their Vices by Charity, should also make their persons apt to do it without objection.

Loripedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus.

No man can endure the Gracchi preaching against Sedition nor Verres prating against Theevery, or Milo against Homicide: and if Herod had made an oration of Humility, or Antiochus of Mercy, men would have thought it had been a design to evil purposes. He that means to gain a Soul must not make his Sermon an ostentation of his eloquence, but the law of his own life. If a Grammarian should speak Solecisms, or a Musician sing like a Bittern, he becomes ridiculous for offending in the faculty he professes. So it is in them who minister to the Conversion of Souls: If they fail in their own life, when they profess to instruct another, they are desective in their proper part, and are unskilful to all their purpoles; and the Cardinal of Crema did with ill success tempt the English Priests to quit their chaste Marriages when himself was deprehended in unchaste embraces. For good counsel seems to be unhallowed, when it is reached forth by an impure hand; and he can ill be believed by another, whose life so consutes his rules, that it is plain he does not believe himself. Those Churches that are zealous for Souls must send into their Ministeries men so innocent, that evil persons may have no excuse to be any longer vicious. When Gorgias went about to perswade the Greeks to be at peace, he had eloquence enough to do advantage to his cause, and reason enough to press it: But Melanthius was glad to put him off, by telling him that he was not sit to perswade Peace, who could not agree at home with his wife, nor make his wife agree with her maid; and he that could not make peace between three single persons, was unapt to prevail for the reuniting sourteen or sifteen commonwealths. And this thing Saint Paul remarks, by enjoying that a Bishop should be chosen such a one as knew well to rule his own house, or else he is not fit to rule the Church of God. And when thou perswadest thy brother to be chafte, let not him deride thee for thy intemperance; and it will ill become thee to be severe against an idle servant, if thou thy self beest useless to the publick; and every notorious Vice is infinitely against the fpirit of Government, and depresses the man to an evennels with com--Facinus quos inquinat equat. To reprove belongs to mon perfons .a Superjour; and as Innocence gives a man advantage over his brother, giving him an artificial and adventitious authority; fo the follies and scandals of a publick and governing man, destroy the efficacy of that authority that is just and natural. Now this is directly an office of Christian Prudence, that good Offices and great Authority become not ineffecrive by ill conduct.

Hither



Hither also it appertains, that in publick or private reproofs, we observe ER M. circumstances of Time, of Place, of Person, of Disposition. The Vices of a King are not to be opened publickly, and Princes must not be repre-hended as a man reproves his servant; but by Categorical propositions, by abstracted declamations, by reprehensions of a crime in its single nature, in private, with humility, and arts of infinuation: And it is against Christian Prudence, not only to use a Prince or great Personage with common language; but it is as great an imprudence to pretend, for such a rudeness, the examples of the Prophets in the Old Testament. For their case was extraordinary, their calling peculiar, their commission special, their spirit miraculous, their authority great as to that single mission; they were like thunder or the trump of God, sent to do that office plainly, for the doing of which in that manner God had given no commission to any ordinary Minister. And therefore we never find that the Priests did use that freedom which the Prophets were commanded to use, whose very words being put into their mouths, it was not to be esteemed an humane act, or a lawful manner of doing an ordinary office; neither could it become a precedent to them whose authority is precarious and without coercion, whose spirit is allayed with Christian graces and duties of humility, whose words are not prescribed, but left to the conduct of Prudence, as it is to be advised by publick necessities and private circumstances, in ages where all things are so ordered, that what was fit and pious amongst the old Jews would be incivil and intolerable to the latter Christians. He also that reproves a Vice should also treat the persons with honour and civilities, and by fair opinions and sweet addresses place the man in the regions of modelty, and the confines of grace, and the fringes of Repentance. For some men are more restrained by an imperfect feared shame, so long as they think there is a reserve of reputation which they may secure, than they can be with all the furious declamations of the world, when themselves are represented ugly and odious, full of shame, and actually punished with the worst of temporal evils, beyond which he sears not here to suffer, and from whence because he knows it will be hard for him to be redeemed by an after-game of reputation, it makes him desperate, and incorrigible by fraternal correption.

A zealous man hath not done his duty when he calls his brother Drunkard and Beast; and he may better do it by telling him he is a Man, and sealed with God's Spirit, and honoured with the title of a Christian, and is, or ought to be, reputed as a discreet person by his friends, and a governour of a family, or a guide in his country, or an example to many, and that it is huge pity so many excellent things should be sullied and allayed with what is fo much below all this. Then a reprover does his duty, when he is severe against the Vice, and charitable to the Man, and careful of his reputation, and forry for his real dishonour, and observant of his circumstances, and watchful to surprize his affections and resolutions there where they are most tender and most tenable: and men will not be in love with Vertue whither they are forced with rudenels and incivilities; but they love to dwell there whither they are invited friendly, and where they are treated civilly, and feasted liberally, and led by

6. It is a duty of Christian Prudence not to suffer our Souls to walk alone, unguarded, unguided, and more single than in other actions and interests of our lives which are of less concernment. Va foli & singulari, faid the Wise man, Wo to him that is alone. And if we confider how much

God hath done to fecure our Souls, and after all that how many ways there are for a man's Soul to miscarry, we should think it very necessary SER M. to call to a Spiritual man to take us by the hand to walk in the ways of God, and to lead us in all the regions of duty, and through the labyrinths of danger. For God, who belt loves and best knows how to value our Soul, fet a price no less upon it than the life-blood of his holy Son; he hath treated it with variety of ulages, according as the world had new guises and new necessities; he abates it with punishment, to make us avoid greater; he shortned our life, that we might live for ever; he turns fickness into Vertue, he brings good out of evil, he turns enmities to advantages, our very fins into repentances and stricter walking; he defeats all the follies of men and all the arts of the Devil, and lays snares and uses violence to secure obedience; he sends Prophets and Priests to invite us and to threaten us to felicities; he restrains us with Laws, and he bridles us with honour and shame, reputation and society, friends and foes; he lays hold on us by the instruments of all the passions; he is enough to fill our love, he satisfies our hope, he affrights us with fear; he gives us part of our reward in hand, and entertains all our faculties with the promises of an infinite and glorious portion; he curbs our Affections, he directs our Wills, he instructs our Understandings with Scriptures, with perpetual Sermons, with good Books, with frequent Discourses, with particular Observations and great Experience, with accidents and judgments, with rare events of Providence and miracles; he fends his Angels to be our guard, and to place us in opportunities of Vertue, and takes us off from ill company and places of danger, to set us near to good examples; he gives us his Holy Spirit, and he becomes to us a principle of a mighty grace, descending upon us in great-variety and undiscerned events, besides all those parts of it which men have reduced to a method and an art: and, after all this, he forgives us infinite irregularities, and spares us every day, and still expects, and passes by, and waits all our days, still watching to do us good, and to save that Soul which he knows is so precious, one of the chiefest of the works of God, and an image of Divinity. Now from all these arts and mercies of God, besides that we have infinite reason to adore his goodness, we have also a demonstration that we ought to do all that possibly we can, and extend all our faculties, and watch all our opportunities, and take in all assistances to secure the interest of our Soul, for which God is pleased to take such care, and use so many arts for its security. If it were not highly worth it, God would not do it : If it were not all of it necessary, God would not do it. But if it be worth it, and all of it be necessary, why should we not labour in order to this great end? If it be worth so much to God, it is so much more to us: for if we perish, his felicity is undisturbed; but we are undone, infinitely undone. It is therefore worth taking in a Spiritual Guide; so far we are gone.

But because we are in the question of Prudence, we must consider whether it be necessary to do so: For every man thinks himself wise enough as to the conduct of his Soul, and managing of his eternal interest; and Divinity is every man's trade, and the Scriptures speak our own language, and the commandments are few and plain, and the Laws are the measure of Justice; and if I say my prayers, and pay my debts, my duty is soon summed up: and thus we usually make our accounts for Eternity, and at this rate only take care for Heaven. But let a man be questioned for a portion of his estate, or have his life shaken with diseases; then it will not be enough to imploy one agent, or to send for a good woman to

ministe



minister a potion of the juices of her country-garden; but the ablest SER M. Lawyers, and the skilfullest Physicians, and the advice of friends, and huge caution, and diligent attendances, and a curious watching concerning all the accidents and little passages of our disease. And truly a man's life and health is worth all that and much more, and in many cases it needs it all.

But then is the foul the only fafe, and the only trifling thing about us? Are not there a thousand dangers, and ten thousand difficulties, and innumerable possibilities of a misadventure? Are not all the Congregations in the world divided in their Doctrines, and all of them call their own way necessary, and most of them call all the rest damnable? We had need of a wife Instructor and a prudent choice at our first entrance and election of our side:and when we are well in the matter of Faith for its object and institution, all the evils of my self, and all the evils of the Church, and all the good that happens to evil men, every day of danger, the periods of fickness, and the day of death, are days of tempest and storm, and our Faith will suffer shipwreck, unless it be strong, and supported and di-But who shall guide the vessel when a stormy Passion or a violent imagination transports the man? who shall awaken his Reason, and charm his Passion into slumber and instruction? How shall a man make his fears confident, and allay his confidence with fear and make the allay with just proportions, and steer evenly between the extremes, or call upon his sleeping purposes, or actuate his choices, or bind him to reason in all his wanderings and ignorances, in his passions and mistakes? For suppose the man of great skill and great learning in the ways of Religion; yet if he be abused by accident or by his own will, who shall then judge his cases of Conscience, and awaken his duty, and renew his holy principle, and actuate his spiritual powers: For Physicians, that prescribe to others, do not minister to themselves in cases of danger and violent sicknesses; & in matter of distemperature we shall not find that books alone will do all the work of a spiritual Physician, more than of a natural. I will not go about to increase the dangers and difficulties of the Soul, to represent the assistance of a spiritual man to be necessary. But of this I am sure; our not understanding and our not considering our Soul, makes us first to neglect, and then many times to lose it. But is not every man an unequal judge in his own case? and therefore the wildome of God and the Laws hath appointed tribunals and Judges and arbitrators. And that men are partial in the matter of Souls it is infinitely certain, because amongst those millions of Souls that perish, not one in ten thousand but believes himself in a good condition; and all the Sects of Christians think they are in the right, and few are patient to enquire whether they be or no. Then adde to this, that the Questions of Souls, being cloathed with circumstances of matter and particular contingency, are or may be infinite; and most men are so unfortunate, that they have so intangled their cases of Conscience, that there where they have done something good, it may be they have mingled half a dozen evils: and when interests are confounded, and governments altered, and power strives with right, and insenfiblypasses into right; & duty to God would fain be reconciled with duty to our relatives, will it not be more than necessary that we should have some one that we may enquire of after the way to Heaven, which is now made intricate by our follies and inevitable accidents? But by what instrument shall men alone, and in their own cases, be able to discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of illusion, just confidence from presumption, fear from pufillanimity? Are not all the things and affillances in the world

world little enough to defend us against pleasure and pain, the two great fountains of temptation? Is it not harder to cure a Lust than to cure a SERM. Feaver? And are not the deceptions and follies of men, and the arts of the Devil, and inticements of the world, and the deceptions of a man's own heart, and the evils of fin, more evil and more numerous than the ficknesses and diseases of any one man? And if a man perishes in his foul, is it not infinitely more fad than if he could rife from his grave and die a thousand deaths over? Thus we are advanced a second step in this prudential motive: God used many arts to secure our soul's interest; and there are infinite dangers and infinite ways of miscarriage in the Soul's interest: and therefore there is great necessity God should do all those mercies of security, and that we should do all the under-ministeries we

can in this great work.

But what advantage shall we receive by a Spiritual Guide? Much every way. For this is the way that God hath appointed, who in every Age hath fent a succession of Spiritual persons, whose office is to minister in holy things, and to be stewards of Gods houshold, shepherds of the slock, dispenfers of the mysteries, under-mediators, and ministers of prayer: preachers of the Law, expounders of questions, monitors of duty, conveiances of bleffings; and that which is a good discourse in the mouth of another man is from them an ordinance of God; and besides its natural efficacy and perswasion, it prevails by the way of blessing, by the reverence of his perfon, by divine institution, by the excellency of order, by the advantages of opinion, and affiftances of reputation, by the influence of the Spirit who is the President of such ministeries, and who is appointed to all Christians according to the dispensation that is appointed to them; to the peo-ple in their Obedience and frequenting of the Ordinance, to the Priest in his ministery and publick and private offices. To which also I adde this confideration, That as the Holy Sacraments are hugely effective to Spiritual purposes, not only because they convey a bleffing to the worthy fuscipients, but because men cannot be worthy suscipients unless they do many excellent acts of Vertue in order to a previous disposition; so that in the whole conjunction and transaction of affairs there is good done by way of proper efficacy and divine bleffing: so it is in following the conduct of a Spiritual man, and consulting with him in the matter of our souls; we cannot do it unless we consider our Souls, and make Religion our business, and examine our present state, and consider concerning our danger, and watch and delign for our advantages, which things of themselves will set a man much forwarder in the way of Godlines; besides that naturally every man will less dare to act a fin for which he knows he shall feel a present shame in his discoveries made to the spiritual Guide, the man that is made the witness of his conversation Τές ἐμ Διος γὰς εἰκος όζει πάνθ' Sophoel. όςαν, Hely men ought to know all things from God, and that relate to God, in order to the conduct of fouls. And there is nothing to be faid against this, if we do not suffer the Devil in this affair to abuse us, as he does many people in their opinions, teaching men to suspect there is a design and a snake under the plantain. But so may they suspect Kings when they command Obedience, or the Levites when they read the Law of Tithes, or Parents when they teach their children Temperance, or Tutors when they watch their charge. However, it is better to venture the worst of the design, than to lose the best of the assistance: and he that guides himself hath much work, and much danger; but he that is under the conduct of another, his work is easie, little and secure; it is nothing but diligence and obedience: and though it be a hard thing to rule well, yet nothing is easier than to follow, and be obedient.



SERMON XXII.

PART III.

A S it is a part of Christian Prudence to take into the conduct of our Souls a Spiritual man for a Guide; so it is also of great concernment that we be prudent in the choice of him whom we are to

trust in so great an interest.

Concerning which it will be impossible to give characters and significations particular enough to enable a choice, without the interval affistances of Prayer, Experience, and the Grace of God. He that describes a man can tell you the colour of his hair, his stature and proportion, and describe some general lines, enough to distinguish him from a Cyclops or a Saracen: but when you chance to fee the man, you will discover figures or little features of which the description had produced in you no Phantasm or expectation. And in the exteriour significations of a Sect, there are more semblances than in mens faces, and greater uncertainty in the figns; and what is faulty strives so crastily to act the true and proper images of things; and the more they are defective in circumstances the more curious they are in forms, and they also use such arts of gaining Proselytes which are of most advantage towards an effect, and therefore such which the true Christian ought to pursue, and the Apostles actually did; and they strive to follow their patterns in arts of perswasion, not only because they would seem like them, but because they can have none so good, so effective to their purposes; that it follows, that it is not more a duty to take care that we be not corrupted with false Teachers, than that we be not abused with false signs: for we as well find a good man teaching a false Proposition, as a good cause managed by ill men; and a holy cause is not always dreffed with healthful symptoms, nor is there a Cross always set upon the doors of those Congregations who are infected with the Plague of Herefy.

When Saint John was to separate false Teachers from true, he took no other course but to remark the Doctrine which was of God, and that should be the mark of cognisance to distinguish right shepherds from robbers and invaders: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the sless, is of God; He that denieth it, is not of God. By this, he bids his Scholars to avoid the present Sects of Ebion, Cerinthus, Simon Magus, and such other persons as denied that Christ was at all before he came, or that he came really in the sless and proper humanity. This is a clear note, and they that conversed with Saint John or believed his doctrine were sufficiently instructed in the present Questions. But this note will signific nothing to us; for all Sects of Christians confess Jesus Christ come in the sless, and the following Sects did avoid that rock over which a great Apostle had hung out so plain a

lantern.

In the following Ages of the Church, men have been fo curious to fignific

fignifie Mif-believers, that they have invented and observed some signs which indeed in some cases were true, real appendages of false Believers; SERM. but yet fuch which were also, or might be, common to them with good men and members of the Catholick Church. Some few I shall remark, and give a short account of them, that by removing the uncertain, we may fix our inquiries and direct them by certain fignifications; lest this art of Prudence turn into folly and faction, errour and secular



1. Some men diffinguish Errour from Truth by calling their adversaries Doctrine, new and of yesterday. And certainly this is a good sign, if it be rightly applied: For fince all Christian Doctrine is that which Christ taught his Church, and the Spirit enlarged or expounded, and the Apoftles delivered; we are to begin the Christian Æra for our Faith, and parts of Religion by the period of their preaching; our account begins then, and whatfoever is contrary to what they taught is new and falle, and whatfoever is belides what they taught is no part of our Religion; (and then no man can be prejudiced for believing it or not) and if it be adopted into the Confessions of the Church, the Proposition is always fo uncertain, that it's not to be admitted into the Faith: and therefore if it be old in respect of our days, it is not therefore necessary to be believed; if it be new, it may be received into opinion according to its probability, and no Sects nor interests are to be divided upon such accounts. only I desire to be observed, That when a truth returns from banishment by a postliminium, if it was from the first, though the holy fire hath been buried, or the River ran under ground, yet we do not call that newsfince newness is not to be accounted of by a proportion to our short-lived memories, or to the broken records and fragments of Story left after the inundation of Barbarilm and War, and change of Kingdoms, and corruption of Authors; but by its relation to the fountain of our Truths. and the birth of our Religion under our Fathers in Christ, the holy Apoftles and Disciples. A Camel was a new thing to them that saw it in the fable; but yet it was created as foon as a Cow or the domestick creatures: and some people are apt to call every thing new which they never heard of before, as if all Religion were to be measured by the standards of their observation or Country-customs. Whatsoever was not taught by Christ or his Apostles, though it came in by Papias or Dienysius, by Arius or Liberius, is certainly new as to our account; and whatfoever is taught to us by the Doctors of the present Age, if it can shew its Test from the beginning of our period for revelation, is not to be called new, though it be pressed with a new zeal, and discoursed of by unheard-of arguments; that is, though men be ignorant and need to learn it, yet it is

not therefore new or unnecessary.

2. Some would have false Teachers sufficiently signified by a Name, or the owning of a private Appellative, as of Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Zuinglian, Socinian; and think it enough to denominate them not of Christ, if they are called by the name of a man. And indeed the thing is in it felf ill: but then if by this Mark we shall esteem false Teachers sufficiently fignified, we must follow no Man, no Church, nor no Communion ; for all are by their adversaries marked with an Appellative of separation and fingularity, and yet themselves are tenacious of a good name, such as they chuse, or such as is permitted to them by fame, and the people, and a natural necessity of making a distinction. Thus the Donatists called themselves The flock of God, and the Novatians called the Catholicks Traditors, and the Eustathians called themselves Catholicks; and the worshippers

of Images made Iconoclast to be a name of scorn; and men made names as ER M. they lifted, or as the fate of the market went. And if a Doctor preaches XXII. a doctrine which another man likes not, but preaches the contradictory, he that consents, and he that refuses, have each of them a Teacher; by whose name, if they please to wrangle, they may be signified. It was so in the Corinthian Church with this only difference, that they divided themfelves by names which fignified the same Religion; I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I am of Peter, and I of Christ. These Apolles were Ministers of Christ; and so does every Teacher new or old among the Christians prerend himself to be. Let that therefore be examined: if he ministers to the truth of Christ and the Religion of his Master, let him be entertained a servant of the Lord; but if an Appellative be taken from his name, there is a faction commenced in it, and there is a fault in the Man if there be none in the Doctrine: but that the Doctrine be true or false, to be received or to be rejected, because of the Name, is accidental and ex-

trinsecal, and therefore not to be determined by this Sign.

3. Amongst some men a Sect is sufficiently thought to be reproved, if it subdivides and breaks into little fractions, or changes its own opinions. Indeed, if it declines its own Doctrine, no man hath reason to believe them upon their word, or to take them upon the stock of reputation, which (themselves being judges) they have forfeited and renounced in the changing that which at first they obtruded passionately. And therefore in this case there is nothing to be done, but to believe the men so far as they have reason to believe themselves; that is, to consider when they prove what they say: and they that are able to do so, are not persons in danger to be seduced by a bare authority unless they list themselves; for others that sink under an unavoidable prejudice, God will take care for them, if they be good people, and their case shall be considered by and by. But for the other part of the Sign, when men fall out among themselves for other interests or opinions, it is no argument that they are in an error concerning that Doctrine which they all unitedly teach or condemn respectively; but it hath in it some probability that their union is a testimony of truth, as certainly as that their fractions are a testimomy of their zeal, or honesty, or weakness, (as it happens.) And if we Chriflians be too decretory in this instance, it will be hard for any of us to keep a Jew from making use of it against the whole Religion, which from the days of the Apostles hath been rent into innumerable Sects and Under-fects, springing from miltake or interest, from the arts of the Devil or the weakness of man. But from hence we may make an advantage in the way of prudence, and become fure that all that Dodrine is certainly true in which the generality of Christians (who are divided in many things, yet) do constantly agree: and that that Doctrine is also sufficient, fince it is certain that, because in all Communions and Churches there are some very good men, that do all their duty to the getting of Truth, God will not fail in any thing that is necessary to them that honestly and heartily defire to obtain it; and therefore if they rest in the heartiness of that, and live accordingly, and superinduce nothing to the destruction of that, they have nothing to do but to relie upon Gods goodness, and if they perilh, it is certain they cannot help it; and that is demonstration enough that they cannot perish, considering the justice and goodness of our Lord and Judge.

4. Whoever break the bands of a Society or communion, and go out from that Congregation in whose Confession they are baptized, do an intolerable scandal to their Doctrine and persons, and give suspi-

cious men reason to decline their assemblies, and not to chuse them at all for any thing of their authority or outward circumstances. And Saint SERM. Paul bids the Romans to mark them that cause divisions and offences: But XXII. the following words make their caution prudent and practicable, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: Ithey that recede from the Doctrine which they have learned, they cause the offence, and if they also obtrude this upon their Congregations, they also make the division. For it is certain, if we receive any Doctrine contrary to what Christ gave and the Apostles taught, for the authority of any man, then we call men Master and leave our Master which is in Heaven; and in that case we must separate from the Congregation, and adhere to Christ: But this is not to be done, unless the case be evident and notorious. But as it is hard that the publick Doctrine of a Church should be risled, and misunderstood, and reproved, and rejected, by any of her wilful or ignorant sons and daughters: so it is also as hard that they should be bound not to see, when the case is plain and evident. There may be mischies on both sides: But the former sort of evils men may avoid if they will; for they may be humble and modest, and entertain better opinions of their Superiours than of themselves, and in doubtful things give them the honour of a just opinion; and if they do not do so, that evil will be their own private: for, that it become not publick, the King and the Bilhop are to take care. But for the latter fort of evil, it will certainly become univerfal: if (I say) an authoritative false Doctrine be imposed, and is to be accepted accordingly: for then all men shall be bound to profess against their Conscience, that is, with their mouths not to confess unto Salvation, what with their hearts they believe unto righteousness. The best way of remedying both the evils is, That Governours lay no burthen of Doctrines or Laws but what are necessary or very profitable; and that Inferiours do not contend for things unnecessary, nor call any thing necessary that is not: till then there will be evils on both sides. And although the Governours are to carry the Question in the point of law, reputation and publick Government; yet as to God's Judicature they will bear the bigger load, who in his right do him an injury, and by the impresses of his authority destroy his truth. But in this case also, although Separating be a fuspicious thing and intolerable, unless it be when a fin is imposed; yet to separate is also accidental to Truth: for some men separate with reafon, some men against reason. Therefore here all the certainty that is in the thing is when the truth is secured, and all the security to the men will be in the humility of their persons, and the heartiness and simplicity of their intention, and diligence of inquiry. The Church of England had reason to separate from the confession and practices of Rome in many particulars; and yet if her children separate from her, they may be unreasonable and impious.

5. The ways of direction which we have from Holy Scripture to diftinguish false Apostles from true are taken from their Doctrine, or their Lives. That of the Doctrine is the more sure way, if we can hit upon it 5 but that also is the thing fignified, and needs to have other figns. John and Saint Paul took this way, for they were able to do it infallibly. All that confess Jesus incarnate are of God, said S. John: Those men that deny it, are Hereticks; avoid them. And Saint Paul bids to observe them that cause divisions and offences against the Doctrine delivered: Them also avoid that do so. And we might do so as easily as they, if the world would only make their Depositum that Doctrine which they delivered to all men, that is, the Creed; and superinduce nothing else, but suffer Christian

Faith to rest in its own perfect simplicity, unmingled with Arts, and SER M. Opinions, and Interests. This course is plain and easie, and I will not XXII. intricate it with more words, but leave it directly in its own truth and certainty, with this only direction; That when we are to chuse our Doctrine or our Side, we take that which is in the plain unexpounded words of Scripture; for in that only our Religion can confift. Secondly, chuse that which is most advantagious to a holy life, to the proper Graces of a Christian, to Humility, to Charity, to Forgiveness and Alms, to Obedience, and complying with Governments, to the honour of God and the exaltation of his Attributes, and to the conservation and advantages of the publick focieties of men; and this last S. Paul directs, Let us be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses: For he that heartily pur-fues these proportions cannot be an ill man, though he were accidentally and in the particular explications, deceived.

6. But because this is an act of Wisdom rather than Prudence, and suppoles Science or knowledg rather than Experience; therefore it concerns the Prudence of a Christian to observe the Practice and the Rules of practice, their Lives and pretences, the designs and colours, the arts of conduct, and gaining Profelytes, which their Doctors and Catechifts do use in order to their purposes, and in their ministery about Souls. For although many figns are uncertain, yet some are infallible, and some are

highly probable.

7. Therefore those Teachers that pretend to be guided by a private spirit are certainly false Doctors. I remember what Simmias in Plutarch tells concerning Socrates, that if he heard any man fay he faw a Divine vision, he presently esteemed him vain and proud; but if he pretended only to have heard a voice of the word of God, he liftned to that religioutly, and would enquire of him with curiofity. There was some reason in his fancie; for God does not communicate himself by the eye to men, but by the ear: Te sam no figure, but ye heard a voice, said Moses to the people concerning God. And therefore if any man pretends to speak the word of God, we will enquire concerning it; the man may the better be heard, because he may be certainly reproved if he speaks amis: but if he pretends to Visions and Revelations, to a private spirit and a mission extraordinary, the man is proud and unlearned, vitious and impudent. No Scripture is of private interpretation, (faith S. Peter) that is, private emifsion or declaration. God's words were delivered indeed by single men, but fuch as were publickly defigned Prophets, remarked with a known character, approved of by the High Priest and Sanhedrim, indued with a publick spirit, and his Doctrines were always agreeable to the other Scriptures. But if any man pretends now to the Spirit, either it must be a private or publick. If it be private, it can but be useful to himself alone, and it may cozen him too, if it be not affifted by the spirit of a publick man. But if it be a publick spirit, it must enter in at the publick door of Ministeries and divine Ordinances, of God's grace and man's endeavour; it must be subject to the Prophets; it is discernable and judicable by them, and therefore may be rejected, and then it must pretend no longer. For he that will pretend to an extraordinary spirit, and refuses to be tried by the ordinary ways, must either prophesie, or work miracles, or must have a voice from Heaven to give him testimony. The Prophets in the Old Testament, and the Apostles in the New, and Christ between both, had no other way of extraordinary probation: and they that pretend to any thing extraordinary, cannot, ought not to be believed, unless they have something more than their own word. If I bear witness of my

felf, my witness is not true, faid Truth it felf, our Blessed Lord. But fecondly, they that intend to teach by an extraordinary spirit, if they pre- SERM. tend to teach according to Scripture, must be examined by the measures of Scripture, and then their extraordinary must be judged by the ordina. XXII. ry spirit, and stands or falls by the rules of every good man's Religion, and publick Government; and then we are well enough. But if they speak any thing against Scripture, it is the spirit of Antichrist, and the spirit of the Devil: For if an Angel from Heaven (he certainly is a spirit)

preach any other Doctrine, let him be accurfed.

But this pretence of a fingle and extraordinary spirit is nothing else but the spirit of Pride, Error, and Delusion, a snare to catch easie and credulous fouls, which are willing to dye for a gay word and a distorted face; it is the parent of folly and giddy doctrine, impossible to be proved, and therefore useless to all purposes of Religion, Reason, or sober counsels; it is like an invisible colour, or musick without a found; it is, and indeed is so intended to be, a direct overthrow of Order, and Government, and publick Ministeries: It is bold to say any thing, and refolved to prove nothing: it imposes upon willing people after the same manner that Oracles and the lying Dæmons did of old time, abusing men not by proper efficacy of its own, but because the men love to be abused: it is a great disparagement to the sufficiency of Scripture, and asperses the Divine Providence, for giving so many Ages of the Church an imperfect Religion, exprelly against the truth of their words who said, they bad declared the whole truth of God, and told all the will of God: and it is an affront to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of order and publick ministeries. But the willfu rnishes out malice, and the understanding sonds out levity, and they marry, and produce a phantastick dream; and the daughter, sucking wind instead of the Milk of the Word, grows up to madness, and the spirit of reprobation. Besides all this, an extraordinary spirit is extremely unnecessary, and God does not give immissions and miracles from Heaven to no purpose, and to no necessities of his Church; for the supplying of which, he hath given Apostles and Evangelists, Prophets and Pastors, Bishops and Priests, the spirit of Ordination and the spirit of Instruction, Catechists and Teachers, Arts & Sciences, Scriptures and a constant succession of Expositors, the testimony of Churches, and a constant line of Tradition, or delivery of Apostolical Doctrine in all things necessary to Salvation. And after all this, to have a fungue arise from the belly of mud and darkness, and nourish a gloworm, that shall challenge to out-shine the lantern of God's word, and all the Candles which God fet upon a hill, and all that the Spirit hath fet upon the Candlesticks, and all the stars of Christ's right hand; is to annul all the excellent, established, orderly and certain effects of the Spirit of God, and to worthip the falle fires of the night. He therefore that will follow a Guide that leads him by an extraordinary spirit shall go an extraordinary way, and have a strange fortune, and a singular Religion, and a portion by himself, a great wayoff from the common inheritance of theSaints, who are all led by the spirit of God, and have one heart and one mind, one Faith and one Hope, the same Baptism, and the helps of the Ministery, leading them to the common Countrey, which is the portion of all that are the fons of Adoption, configued by the Spirit of God, the earnest

Concerning the pretence of a private spirit for interpretation of the confessed Doctrine of God, (the Holy Scriptures,) it will not so easily come into this Question of chusing our Spiritual Guides: because every perfou



person that can be Candidate in this Office, that can be chosen to guide SERM. others, must be a publick man, that is, of a holy calling, fanctified or separate publickly to the Office; and then to interpret is part of his cal-XXII. ling and imployment, and to do so is the work of a publick spirit; he is ordained and designed, he is commanded and enabled to do it: and in this there is no other caution to be interposed, but that the more publick the man is, of the more authority his Interpretation is; and he comes nearest to a law of order, and in the matter of Government is to be observed: but the more holy and the more learned the man is, his Interpretation in matter of Question is more likely to be true; and though less to be presfed as to the publick Confession, yet it may be more effective to a private perswasion, provided it be done without scandal, or lessening the authority, or disparagement to the more publick person.

8. Those are to be suspected for evil Guides, who, to get authority among the people, pretend a great Zeal, and use a bold liberty in reproving Princes and Governours, Nobility and Prelates; for such Homilies cannot be the effects of a holy Religion, which lay a fnare for Authority, and undermine Power, and discontent the people, and make them bold against Kings, and immodest in their own stations, and trouble the Government. Such men may speak a truth, or teach a true Doctrine; for every such design does not unhallow the truth of God: but they take some Truths, and force them to minister to an evil end. But therefore mingle not in the communities of fuch men, for they will make it a part of your Religion, to profecute that end openly which they by arts of the Tempter

have infinuated privately.

But if ever you enter into the feats of those Doctors that speak reproachfully of their Superiours, or detract from Government, or love to curse the King in their heart, or flander him with their mouths, or disgrace their person, bless your self and retire quickly; for there dwells the plague, but the Spirit of God is not President of the assembly. therefore you shall observe in all the Characters which the B. Apostles of our Lord made for describing and avoiding societies of Hereticks, false guides, and bringers in of strange Doctrines, still they reckon Treason and Rebellion. SoS. Paul; In the last days perillous times shall come; then men shall have the form of godliness and deny the power of it; they shall be Traitors, heady, high-minded; that's the Characteristick note. So S. Peter; The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of Judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise Government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities. The same also is recorded and observed by S. Jude; Likewise also these filthy dreamers desile the slesh, despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities. These three testimonies are but the declaration of one great contingency; they are the same Prophecy declared by three Apostolical men, that had the gift of Prophecy: and by this character the Holy Ghost in all Ages hath given us caution to avoid fuch affemblies, where the speaking and ruling man shall be the canker of Government, and a preacher of Sedition, who shall either ungirt the Prince's sword, or unloose the button of their mantle.

9. But the Apostles in all these Prophecies have remarked Lust to be the inseparable companion of these Rebel-Prophets: They are filthy dreamers, they defile the flesh, so S. Jude; They walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, so S. Peter. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, incontinent and fensual, so Saint Paul. And by this part of the

Jude v. 8.

character, as the Apostles remarked the Nicolaitans, the Gnosticks, the Carpocratians, and all their impure branches which began in their days, SER M. and multiplied after their deaths; so they prophetically did fore-signifie all such Sects to be avoided, who, to catch filly women laden with fins, preach Doctrines of ease and licentiousness, apt to countenance and encourage vile things; and not apt to restrain a passion, or mortisie a sin : Such as those; That God sees no sin in his children; That no sin will take us from Gods favour; That all of such a party are elect people; That God requires of us nothing but faith; and that Faith which justifies is nothing but a mere believing that we are God's chosen; That we are not tied to the Law of Commandments; That the Law of grace is a Law of Liberty, and that Liberty is to do what we lift; That Divorces are to be granted upon many and flight causes; That simple Fornication is no fin. These are such Doctrines, that upon the belief of them men may do any thing, and will do that which shall satisfie their own desires, and promote their interests, and seduce their She-disciples. And indeed it was not without great reason that these three Apostles joyned Lust and Treason together. Because the former is so shameful a crime, and renders a man's spirit naturally averse to Government, that if it falls upon the perfon of a Ruler, it takes from him the spirit of Government, and renders him diffident, pufillanimous, private, and asbamed : if it happen in the perfon of a Subject, it makes him hate the man that shall shame him and punish him; it hates the light and the Sun, because that opens him, and therefore is much more against Government, because that publishes and punishes too. One thing I defire to be observed, That though the Primitive Hereticks now named, and all those others, their successors, prachifed and taught horrid impurities, yet they did not invade Government at all; and therefore those Sects that these Apostles did signifie by prophecy, and in whom both these are concentred, were to appear in some latter times, and the days of the Prophecie were not then to be fulfilled: What they are since, every Age must judge by its own experience, and for its own interest. But Christian Religion is so pure and holy, that Chastity is sometimes used for the whole Religion; and to do an action chastly fignifies purity of intention, abstraction from the world, and separation from low and secular ends, the virginity of the Soul, and its union with God; and all deviations and eftrangements from God, and adhesion Eloquia Domito forbidden objects, is called Fornication and Adultery. Those Sects "icaffactoquia, therefore that teach, encourage, or practife impious or unhallowed mixtures and shameful Lusts, are issues of the impure spirit, and most contrary to God, who can behold no unclean thing.

10. Those Prophets and Pastors that pretend severity, and live loosely, or are severe in small things, and give liberty in greater, or forbid some sins with extreme rigour, and yet practise or teach those that serve their interest or constitute their Sect, are to be suspected and avoided accordingly. Nihil est hominum inepta persuasione falsus, nec sicta severitate ineptius. All ages of the Church were extremely curious to observe, when any new Teachers did arise, what kind of Lives they lived; and if they pretended severely and to a strict life, then they knew their danger doubled: for it is certain all that teach Doctrines contrary to the established Religion delivered by the Apostles, all they are evil men. God will not suffer a good man to be seduced damnably, much less can be be a seducer of others : and therefore you shall still observe the false Apostles to be furious, and vehement in their reproofs, and severe in their animadversions of others: but then if you watch their private, or stay till



their numbers are full, or observe their spiritual habits, you shall find SERM. them indulgent to themselves, or to return from their disguises, or so spiritually wicked, that their Pride or their Revenge, their Envy or their Detraction, their Scorn or their Complacency in themselves, their desire of preeminence and their impatience of a rival, shall place them far enough in distance from a poor carnal sinner, whom they shall load with censures and an upbraiding scorn; but themselves are like Devils, the spirits of darkness, the spiritual wickednesses, in high places. Some Sects of men are very angry against servants for recreating and easing their labours with a less-prudent and unsevere refreshment: but the Patrons of their Sects shall oppress a wicked man and unbelieving person; they shall chastise a Drunkard, and entertain Murmurers; they shall not abide an Oath, and yet shall force men to break three or four. This Sect is to be avoided, because although it is good to be severe against carnal and bodily sins, yet it is not good to mingle with them who chastise a bodily sin to make way for a spiritual; or reprove a servant, that his Lord may sin alone; or punish a stranger and a beggar that will not approve their sin, but will have sins of his own. Concerning such persons, S. Paul hath told us, that they shall not proceed far, but their folly shall be manifest, 'Ολίγον χε ένον δύναι' άντις πλάσα θαι τον τε επό τε αυτε said Lysias. Cito ad naturam sita reciderunt su-They that diffemble their fin and their manners, or make severity to serve loosness, and an imaginary Vertue to minister to a real Vice; they that abborr Idols, and would commit Sacriledge, chastise a Drunkard, and promote Sedition, declaim against the Vanity of great persons, and then spoil them of their goods, reform Manners, and engross Estates, talk godly, and do impioully; these are Teachers which the holy Spirit of God hath by three Apostles bid us to beware of and decline, as we would run from the hollowness of a grave, or the despairs and sorrows of the

11. The substance of all is this, that we must not chuse our Doctrine by our Guide, but our Guide by the Doctrine; and if we doubt concerning the Doctrine, we may judge of that by the Lives and Designs of the Teachers: By their fruits you shall know them; and by the plain words of the Scripture, by the Apostles Creed, and by the Commandments, and by the certain known and established forms of Government. These are the great indices, and so plain, apt and easie, that he that is deceived is so be-cause he will be so; he is betrayed into it by his own Lust, and a volun-

tary chosen folly.

12. Besides these premises there are other little candles that can help to make the judgment clearer; but they are such as do not signific alone but in conjunction with some of the precedent characters which are drawn by the great lines of Scripture. Such as are, 1. When the Teachers of Sects stir up unprofitable and useless questions. 2. When they causelesly retire from the universal customs of Christendome. 3. And cancel all the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our Redemption. 4. When their Confessions and Catechisms and their whole Religion confifts in yrase, in speculations and ineffective notions, in discourses of Angels and Spirits, in abstractions and raptures, in things they understand not, and of which they have no revelation. 5. Or else if their Religion spends it self in ceremonies, outward guises, and material solemnities, and imperfect forms, drawing the heart of the Vine forth into leaves and irregular fruitless suckers, turning the substance into circumstances, and the love of God into gestures, and the effect of the Spirit into the impertinent offices of a burthensome Ceremonial: For by these

two particulars the Apostles reproved the Jews and the Gnosticks, or those that from the School of Pythagoras pretended conversation with Angels, SERM. and great knowledge of the secrets of the Spirits, chusing Tutelar Angels, and assigning them offices and charges, as in the Church of Rome XXII. to this day they do to Saints. To these add, 6. That we observe whether Colost 2. the Guides of Souls avoid to suffer for their Religion; for then the matter is foul, or the man not fit to lead, that dares not die in cold blood for his Religion. Will the man lay his Life and his Soul upon the proposition? If so, then you may consider him upon his proper grounds; but if he refuses that, refuse his conduct sure enough. 7. You may also watch whether they do not chuse their Proselytes among the rich and vicious; that they may serve themselves upon his wealth, and their disciple upon his Vice. 8. If their Doctrines evidently and greatly serve the interest of Wealth or Honour, and are ineffective to Piety. 9. If they strive to gain any one to their Confession, and are negligent to gain them to good Life. 10. If by pretences they lessen the severity of Christ's precepts, and are easie in dispensations and licentious glosses. 11. If they invent suppletories to excuse an evil man, and yet to reconcile his bad life with the hopes of Heaven; you have reason to suspect the whole, and to reject these parts of error and design which in themselves are so unhandsome always, and sometimes criminal. He that shall observe the Church of Rome so implacably sierce for Purgatory and the Pope's Supremacy, for Clerical immunities and the Superiority of the Ecclefiastical persons to Secular, for Indulgences and precious and costly Pardons, and then so full of devices to reconcile an evil life with Heaven, requiring only Contrition even at the last for the abolition of eternal guilt, and having a thousand ways to commute and take off the temporal; will see he hath reason to be jealous that interest is in these bigger than the Religion, and yet that the danger of the Soul is greater than that Interest; and therefore the man is to do accordingly.

Here indeed is the great necessity that we should have the Prudence and discretion, the of process of Serpents.

magisut cernamus acutum Quam aut aquila aut serpens Epidaurius -

For so Serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from contrition or a bruile, so also to safeguard themselves that they be not charmed with sweet and enticing words of false Prophets, who charm not wifely, but cunningly, leading afide unstable souls: against these we must stop our ears, or lend our attention, according to the foregoing measures and fignifications. But here also I am to insert two or three Cautions.

1. We cannot expect that by these or any other Signs we shall be inabled to discover concerning all men whether they teach an error or no: Neither can a man by these reprove a Lutheran or a Zuinglian, a Dominican or a Franciscan, a Russian or a Greek, a Muscovite or a Georgian; be-cause those that are certain signs of false Teachers, do signific such men who destroy an Article of Faith or a Commandment. God was careful to fecure us from death by removing the Lepers from the camp, and giving certain notices of distinction, and putting a term between the living and the dead: but he was not pleased to secure every man from innocent and harmless Errours, from the mistakes of men, and the failings of mortality: The figns which can distinguish a living man from a dead, will not also distinguish a black man from a brown, or a pale from a white: It is enough that we decline those Guides that lead us to Hell, but not to

SERM. ing brother.

think that we are inticed to death by the weaknesses of every disagree-

2. In all discerning of Sects we must be careful to distinguish the faults XXII. of men from the evils of their Doctrine; for some there are that say very well, and do very ill; ein pag

> Δη νας θηκοφόρ οι πολλοί, Βάνχοιδέ γε παυροί, Multos Thyrsigeros, pancos est cernere Bacchos;

Many men of holy calling and holy Religion, that are of unholy lives; homines ignava opera, Philosopha sententia. But these must be separated from the Institution: and the evil of the men is only to be noted, as that fuch persons be not taken to our single conduct and personal ministery. I will be of the man's Religion if it be good, though he be not; but I will not make him my Confessor. Μισώ σοφίσην, όσις κχ άντώ σοφός, If he be not mife for himself, I will not fit down at his feet, lest we mingle filthiness instead

of being cleanfed and instructed.

3. Let us make one Separation more, and then we may consider and act according to the premisses. If we espy a design or an evil mark upon one Doctrine, let us divide it from the other that are not so spotted. For indeed the publick communions of men are at this day so ordered, that they are as fond of their Errors as of their Truths, and sometimes most zealous for what they have least reason to be so. And if we can by any arts of Prudence separate from an evil proposition, and communicate in all the good, then we may love Colleges of Religious persons, though we do not worship Images; and we may obey our Prelates, though we do no injury to Princes; and we may be zealous against a crime, though we be not imperious over mens persons; and we may be diligent in the conduct of Souls, though we be not rapacious of Estates: and we may be moderate exacters of Obedience to Humane Laws, though we do not dispence with the breach of the Divine; and the Clergy may represent their Calling necessary, though their persons be full of modesty and humility; and we may preserve our Lights, and not lose our Charity. For this is the meaning of the Apoltle, Try all things, and retain that which is good: from every Sect and Community of Christians take any thing that is good, that advances holy Religion, and the Divine honour. For one hath a better Government, a second a better Consession, a third hath excellent spiritual arts for the Conduct of Souls, a fourth hath fewer Errors; and by what instrument soever a holy life is advantaged, use that, though thou grindest thy spears and arrows at the forges of the Philistines; knowing thou hast no Master but Christ, no Religion but the Christian, no Rule but the Scriptures and the Laws and right Reason: other things that are helps, are to be used accordingly.

These are the general Rules of Christian Prudence which I have chofen to infift upon: there are many others more particular indeed, but yet worth not only the enumerating, but observing also, and that they be reduced to practice. For the Prudence of a Christian does oblige and direct respectively all the Children of the Institution, * That we be careful to decline a danger, * watchful against a temptation, * always chusing that that is safe, and fitted to all circumstances; * That we be wise in chusing our company, * reserved and wary in our friendships, * and communicative in our Charity; * that we be filent and retentive of what we hear and what we think, * not credulous, * not unconstant; * that we be deliberate in our election, * and vigorous in our profecutions; * that

we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our SERM. Religion to God and our eternal interest: for sometimes that which is XXII. counselled to us by Christian Prudence is accounted folly by humane prudence, and so it is ever accounted when our duty leads us into a persecution. Hither also appertain, * That we never do a thing that we know we must repent of; * that we do not admire too many things, nor any thing too much; * that we be even in prosperity, and patient in adversity, but transported with neither, into the regions of Despair or Levity, pufillanimity or Tyranny, dejection or garishness; * always to look upon the scar we have impressed upon our flesh, and no more to handle dangers and knives; * to abstain from ambitious and vexatious Suits; * not to contend with a mighty man; * ever to listen to him who (according to the Proverb) hath four ears, Reason, Religion, Wisdom, and Experience 3 * rather to lose a benefit, than to suffer a detriment and an evil; * to stop the beginnings of evil; * to pardon and not to observe all the faults, of friends or enemies; * of evils to chuse the least, * and of goods to chuse the greatest, if it be also safest; * not to be insolent in success, but to proceed according to the probability of humane causes and contingencies; * ever to be thankful for benefits, and profitable to others, and useful in all that we can; * to watch the seasons and circumstances of actions; to do that willingly which cannot be avoided, left the necessity serve anothers appetite, and it be lost to all our purposes, Insignis enim est prudentiæ ut quod non facere non possis, id ita facere ut libenter fécisse videaris; * not to pursue difficult, uncertain and obscure things with violence and passion. These if we observe, we shall do advantage to our selves and to the Religion; and avoid those evils which fools and unwary people suffer for nothing, dying or bleeding without cause and without pity. I end this with the saying of Socrates, χωράδμενα φερώσιως η αλ- Plat. Phado. λαπόμενα αντί αλλήλων, μη σπιαίρωρία τις η η ποιωντή αφετή, η το ονί αν- δραποδίδης τε, η έδω ύγες έδι αλιθές έχη · Vertue is but a shadow and a servile imployment; unless it be adorned and instructed with Prudence, which gives motion and conduct, spirits and vigorousness to Religion, making it not only humane and reasonable, but Divine and Celestial.



do nam viev)

Selvional :

SERM.

Sermon XXIII.

OF

CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY.

Matth. 10. latter part of Verse 16.

And barmless as Doves.



UR Bleffed Saviour having prefac'd concerning Prudence, adds to the integrity of the Precept, and for the conduct of our Religion, That we be simple as well as prudent, innocent as well as wary. Harmless and Safe together do well; for without this bleffed union Prudence turns into Craft, and Simplicity degenerates into Folly. Prudens simplicitas is Martial's character of a good man; a wary and cautious

innocence, a harmless prudence and provision; Verà simplicitate bonus. A true simplicity is that which leaves to a man arms defensive, his castles and strong forts; but takes away his swords and spears, his anger and his malice, his peevishness and spite. But such is the misery and such is the iniquity of mankind, that Craft hath invaded all the contracts and entercourfes of men, and made Simplicity fo weak a thing, that it is grown into contempt, sometimes with, and sometimes without reason: Et homines simplices, minime malos, the Romans called parum cautos, sape stolidos; unwary fools and defenceless people were called simple. And when the innocence of the old simple Romans in Julius Brutus time, in Fabritius and Camillus began to degenerate, and to need the Aquilian Law to force men to deal honestly; quickly the mischief increased, till the Aquilian Law grew as much out of power as Honesty was out of countenance. And there, and every-where else, men thought they got a purchase when they met with an honest man : and in Ni Stov Aristotle calls xensons and τ όρχιλου κ, τ μανικου, απλου. A fool is a profitable person, and he that is simple is little better than mad: And so it is when Simplicity wants Prudence. He that because he means honestly himself, thinks every man else does so, and therefore is unwary in all or any of his entercourses, is a simple man in an evil sence: and therefore S. Gregory Nazianzen remarks Constantius with a note of folly, for suffering his easig nature to be abused by Georgins, δικήδται την βασιλέως απλέτη α, έτως γδ έχω καλώ σύν κεφότητα · αίδ' εμεν Φ την ευλάβον. The Prince's simplicity, (o he calls it for reverence; but indeed it was folly, for it was zeal without knowledge. But it was a better temper which he observed in his own father, in άπλότης μ, το το κουλου, such a simplicity which only manted craft or deceit, but wanted no prudence or caution: and that is truly Christian simplicity, or the sincerity of an honest, and ingenuous, and a fearless person; and it is a rare band, not only of Societies and Contracts, but also of Friendships and advantages of mankind.

Orat. 21.

We

We do not live in an Age in which there is so much need to bid men be wary, as to take care that they be innocent. Indeed in Religion we are SERM. usually too loose and ungirt, exposing our selves to temptation, and others to offence, and our name to dishonour, and the cause it self to reproach, and we are open and ready to every evil but perfecution: from that we are close enough, and that alone we call Prudence; but in the matter of Interest we are wary as serpents, subtle as foxes, vigilant as the Birds of the night, rapacious as Kites, tenaccious as grapling hooks and the weightiest anchors, and, above all, false and hypocritical as a thin crust of ice spread upon the face of a deep, smooth and dissembling pit; if you set your foot, your foot slips, or the ice breaks, and you fink into death, and are wound in a sheet of water, descending into mischief, or your grave, suffering a great fall, or a sudden death by your confidence and unsuspecting foot. There is an universal crust of Hypocrisie that covers the face of the greatest part of mankind. Their religion consists in forms and outfides, and serves reputation or a design, but does not serve God. Their promises are but fair language, and the civilities of the Piazzas or Exchanges, and disband and untye like the air that beat upon their teeth when they spake the delicious and hopeful words: Their Oaths are snares to catch men, and make them consident: Their Contracts are arts and stratagems to deceive, measured by profit and possibilitie; and every thing is lawful that is gainful: And their Friendships are trades of getting; and their kindness of watching a dying Friend is but the office of a Vulture, the gaping for a Legacy, the spoil of the carcass: their Sicknesses many times are policies of state; sometimes a design to fhew the riches of our Bed-chamber: And their Funeral tears are but the paranymphs and pious folliciters of a second Bride. And every thing that is ugly must be hid, and every thing that is handsome must be seen; and that will make a fair cover for a huge deformity. And therefore it is (as they think) necessary that men should always have some pretences and forms, some faces of Religion or sweetness of language, confident affirmatives or bold Oaths, protracted treaties or multitude of words, affected silence or grave deportment, a good name, or a good cause, a fair relation or a worthy calling, great power or a pleasant wit; any thing that can be fair or that can be useful, any thing that can do good or be thought good, we use it to abuse our brother, or promote our interest. Leporina resolved to die, being troubled for her husband's danger; and he resolved to die with her that had so great a kindness for him, as not to out-live the best of her hulband's fortune. It was agreed; and the temper'd the poison, and drank the face of the unwholfome goblet; but the weighty poifon funk to the bottom, and the easie man drank it all off, and died, and the woman carried him forth to funeral, and after a little illness, which she soon recovered, the enter'd upon the inheritance, and a second marriage.

Tuta frequensque via eft-

It is an usual and fafe way to cozen, upon colour of Friendship or Religion; but that is hugely criminal: To tell a lie to abuse a man's belief. and by it to enter upon any thing of his possession to his injury, is a perfect destruction of all humane society, the most ignoble of all humane sollies, perfectly contrary to God, who is Truth it self, the greatest argument of a timorous and a base, a cowardly and a private mind, not at all pissent to de honest or consident to see the Sun. a vice fit for slaves; avontor & orsho Regno. seed τα ολέινα Δευθεται παίνων μαλιςα, κ, έξαπατά for the most timorous

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Car, Eth.

and the basest of the beasts use crast, and lie in wait, and take their prey, SER M. and fave their lives by deceit. And it is the greatest injury to the abused person in the world: For, besides that it abuses his interest, it also makes him for ever insecure, and uneasse in his considence, which is the period of cares, the rest of a man's spirit; it makes it necessary for a man to be jealous and suspicious, that is, to be troublesome to himself and every man else: and above all, Lying, or Crastiness, and unfaithful usages, rob a man of the Honour of his Soul, making his understanding useless and in the condition of a fool, spoiled, and dishonoured, and despised. मर्वेज्य प्राप्त में वेंगडव्य इस्ट्रेंन ता रोंड वेरेगिर्टिवड, said Plato; Every soul loses Truth very unwillingly: Every man is so great a lover of Truth, that if he hath it not, he loves to believe he hath, and would fain have all the world to believe as he does, either presuming that he hath truth, or else hating to be deceived, or to be esteemed a cheated and abused person. Non licet suffurari mentem hominis etiam Samaritani, said R. Moses, sed veritatem loquere, atque age ingenue; if a man be a Samaritan, that is, a hated person, a person from whom you differ in matter of Religion, yet steal not his mind away, but speak truth to him honestly and ingenuously. A man's Soul loves to dwell in Truth, it is his resting-place; and if you take him from thence, you take him into strange regions, a place of banishment and dishonour, Qui ignotos lædit, Latro appellatur; qui amicos, paulo minus quam Parricida: He that hurts strangers is a Thies; but he that hurts his friends is little better than a Parricide. That's the brand and stigma of Hypocrisie and Lying: it hurts our friends, Mendacium in damnum potens, and makes the man that owns it guilty of a crime, that is to be punished by the forrows usually suffered in the most execrable places of the cities. But I must reduce the duty to particulars, and discover the contrary Vice by feveral parts of its proportion.

1. The first office of a Christian Simplicity, consists in our Religion and Manners; that they be open and honest, publick and justifiable, the fame at home and abroad; for belides the ingenuity and honelty of this there is an indispensible and infinite necessity it should be so; because whoever is an Hypocrite, in his Religion mocks God, presenting to him the outside, and reserving the inward for his enemy; which is either a denying God to be the fearcher of our bearts, or else an open desiance of his Omniscience and of his Justice. To provoke God, that we may deceive men; to desie his Almightiness, that we may abuse our brother; is, to destroy all that is Sacred, all that is prudent; it is an open hostility to all things humane and divine, a breaking from all the bands of all relations; and uses God so cheaply, as if he were to be treated or could be cozened like a weak man, and an undiscerning and easie merchant. But

fo is the life of many men;

Vita fallax, abditos sensus gerens, Nimisque pulchram turpibus faciem induens,

It is a crafty life that men live, carrying designs, and living upon secret purposes. Pudor impudentem celat, audacem quies, pietas nefandum, vera fallaces probant, simulánt que molles dura. Men pretend modesty and under that red veil are bold against Superiours; saucy to their betters upon pretences of Religion; invaders of others rights by false Propositions in Theology; pretending humility, they challenge superiority above all orders of men; and for being thought more boly, think that they have title to govern the world: they bear upon their face great Religion, and are impious in their Relations, false to their trust, unfaithful to their friend, unkind

to their dependants; όφενς επμεπότες κ) το φε ένιμον ζητώντες εν τοίς σθεπάτοις, turning up the white of their eye, and seeking for reputation in the streets: fo SER M. did some of the old Hypocrites, the Gentile Pharisees; Asperum cultum, & intonsum caput, negligentiorem barbam, & nitidum argento odium, & cubile humi positum, & quicquid alind ambitionem via perversa sequitur; being the softest persons under an austere habit, the loosest livers under a contracted brow, under a pale face having the reddest and most spritely Livers. These kind of men have abused all Ages of the world, and all Religions; it being so easie in nature, so prepared and ready for mischiefs, that men should creep into opportunities of devouring the flock upon pretence of defending them, and to raise their estates upon colour of faving their Souls.

Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decorà.

Men that are like painted Sepulchres, entertainment for the eye, but images of death, chambers of rottenness and repositories of dead mens bones. It may sometimes concern a man to seem Religious; God's glory may be shewed by fair appearances, or the edification of our brother, or the reputation of a cause; but this is but sometimes: but it always concerns us, that we be religious; and we may reasonably think, that if the colours of Religion fo well do advantage to us, the substance and reality would do it much more. For no man can have a good by seeming religious, and another by not being so; the power of godliness never destroys any well-built fabrick that was raised upon the reputation of Religion and its Pretences. Nunquam est peccare utile, quia semper est turpe, said Cicero: It is never profitable to sin, because it is always base and dishonest. And if the face of Religion could do a good turn, which the heart and substance does destroy, then Religion it self were the greatest Hypo-crite in the world, and promises a blessing which it never can perform, but must be beholden to his enemy to verifie its promises. No: We shall be sure to feel the blessings of both the worlds, if we serve in the offices of Religion devoutly and charitably before men and before God: if we ask of God things honelt in the light of men μέτα φωνής εὐχόμιλων, (as Pythagoras gave in precept) praying to God with a free heart and a publick prayer, and doing before men things that are truly pleasing to God, turning our heart outwards and our face inwards, that is, converling with men, as in the presence of God; and in our private towards God, being as holy and devout as if we prayed in publick, and in the corners of the streets. Pliny praising Ariston gave him the title of an honest and hearty Religion: Ornat hunc magnitudo animi que nibil ad oftentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert, rectéque facti, non ex populi sermone, mercedem, sed ex facto petit. And this does well state the question of a fincere Religion, and an ingenious goodness: It requires that we do nothing for oftentation, but every thing for Conscience; and we may be obliged in conscience to publish our manner of lives, but then it must be, not that we may have a popular noise for a reward, but that God may be glorified by our publick worthippings, and others edified by our good examples.

Neither doth the fincerity of our Religion require that we should not conceal our fins; for he that fins, and dares to own them publickly, may become impudent: and so long, as in modelty we defire our shame should be hid, and men to think better of us, than we deserve, I say, for no other reason but either because we would not derive the ill examples to others, or the shame to our selves; we are within the protection of

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one of Vertue's fifters, and we are not far from the gates of the Kingdom SERM. of Heaven; easie and apt to be invited in, and not very unworthy to enter.

> But if any other principle draws the veil, if we conceal our vices because we would be honoured for Sanctity, or because we would not be hindered in our designs, we serve the interest of Pride and Ambition, Covetousness, or Vanity. If an innocent purpose hides the ulcer, it does half heal it; but if it retires into the secrefie of sin and darkness, it turns into a plague, and infects the heart, and it dies infallibly of a double The Macedonian boy that kept the cole in his flesh, and would not shake his arm, lest he should disturb the sacrifice, or discompose the Ministery before Alexander the Great, conceased his pain to the honour of Patience and Religion: But the Spartan boy, who suffered the little fox to eat his bowels, rather than confess his theft, when he was in danger of discovery, payed the price of a bold hypocrifie. That is the diffimulation reproveable in matter of manners, which conceals one fin to make way for another. οί κ μαλα τεμνοί κ σκυθρωποί τα έξω κ τα δημοσία φ αινόμεξιοι, εί παιδός ώς als η γυναίκος λάβωνται, όσα ποιδοιν; Lucian notes it of his Philosophical hypocrites, dissemblers in matter of deportment and Religion; they feem fevere abroad, but they enter into the vaults of Harlots, and are not ashamed to see a naked sin in the midst of its ugliness and undresfed circumstances. A mighty wrastler, that had won a Crown at Olympus for contending prosperoully, was observed to turn his head and go forward with his face upon his shoulder, to behold a fair woman that was prefent; and he lost the glory of his strength, when he became so weak that a woman could turn his head about, which his adversary could not. These are the follies and weaknesses of man, and dishonours to Religion, when a man shall contend nobly, and do handsomely; and then be taken in a base or a dishonourable action, and mingle venome with his delicious oint-

> > Quid ? quod olet gravius mistum diapasmate virus, Atque duplex anima longius exit odor.

When Fescenia perfumed her breath that she might not smell of wine, the condemned the crime of drunkenness; but grew ridiculous when the wine broke through the cloud of a tender perfume, and the breath of a Lozenge. And that indeed is the reward of an hypocrite; his laborious arts of concealment furnish all the world with declamation and severity against the crime which himself condemns with his caution: But when his own sentence too is prepared against the day of his discovery,

> Notas ergo nimis fraudes deprensaque furta Jam tollas, & sis ebria simpliciter.

A simple Drunkard hath but one fault: But they that avoid discovery, that they may drink on without shame or restraint, add Hypocrisie to their vicious fulness; and for all the amazements of their consequent discovery have no other recompence, but that they pleased themselves in the security of their crime, and their undeserved reputation.

> Sic que nigrior est cadente moro, Cerussata sibi placet Lycoris:

For so the most easie and deformed woman, whose girdle no foolish young young man will unloose, because she is blacker than the falling mulberry, may please her self under a skin of Cerusse, and call her self sairer than SER M. Pharaoh's daughter, or the Hinds living upon the fnowy mountains.

One thing more there is to be added as an instance to the simplicity of Religion; and that is, That we never deny our Religion, or lie concerning our Faith, nor tell our propositions and Articles deceitfully, nor instruct Novices or Catechumens with fraud; but that when we teach them we do it honestly, justly and severely, not always to speak all, but never to speak otherwise than it is, nor to hide a truth from them, whose Souls are concerned in it that it be known. Neque enim id est celare, cum Cicero, lib 3: quid reticeas; sed cum, quod tu scias, id ignorare emolumenti tui causa velis eos quorum interest id scire : So Cicero determines the case of Prudence and Simplicity. The discovery of pious frauds; and the disclaiming of falle, but profitable and rich propositions; the quitting honours fraudulently gotten, and unjustly detained; the reducing every man to the perfect understanding of his own Religion, fo far as can concern his duty; the disallowing false Miracles, Legends, and fabulous Stories, to cozen the people into awfulness, fear and Superstition; these are parts of Christian Simplicity which do integrate this duty. For Religion hath strengths enough of its own to support it self; it needs not a Devil for its advocate; it is the breath of God; and as it is purer than the beams of the morning, so it is stronger than a tempest, or the combination of all the winds, though united by the Prince that ruleth in the air. And we find that the Nicene Faith prevailed upon all the world, though some Arian Bilhops went from Ariminum to Nice, and there decreed their own Articles, and called it The Faith read at Nice, and used all Arts, and all Violence, and all Lying, and Diligence to discountenance it; yet it could not be, it was the truth of God, and therefore it was stronger than all the gates of Hell, than all the powers of darkness. And he that tells a lie for his Religion, or goes about by fraud and imposture to gain proselytes, either dares not trust his cause, or dares not trust his God. True Religion is open in its Articles, honest in its prosecutions, just in its conduct, innocent when it is accused, ignorant of falshood, sure in its truth, fimple in its fayings; and (as Julius Capitolinus faid of the Emperour Verus) it is morum simplicium; & que adumbrare nihil possit: It covers indeed a multitude of sins by curing them, and obtaining pardon for them; but it can dissemble nothing of it self, it cannot tell or do a lie: but it can become a facrifice; a good man can quit his life, but never his integrity. That's the first duty; the sum of which is that which Aquilius faid concerning Fraud and Craft; Bona fides, The honesty of a man's Faith and Religion is destroyed cum aliud simulatum, aliud adum sit, when either we conceal what we ought to publish, or do not act what we pre-

2. Christian Simplicity or the innocence of Prudence relates to Laws both in their fanction and execution; that they be decreed with equity, and proportioned to the capacity and profit of the Subjects, and that they be applied to practice with remissions and reasonable interpretations, agreeable to the sence of the words and the mind of the Lawgiver. But Laws are not to be cozened and abused by contradictory glosses, and phantastick elusions; as knowing that if the Majesty and facredness of them be once abused, and subjected to contempt, and unreasonable and case resolutions, their girdle is unloosed, and they suffer the thame of proftitution and contempt. When saul made a Law, that he that did eat before night should die, the people perswaded him directly

to rescind it in the case of Jonathan; because it was unequal and unjust, ERM, that he who had wrought their deliverance, and, in that working it, was absent from the promulgation of the Law, should suffer for breaking it, in a case of violent necessity, and of which he heard nothing, upon so fair and probable a cause. And it had been well that the Persian had been fo rescued, who against the Laws of his Country, killed a Lion to save the life of his Prince. In fuch cases it is fit the Law be rescinded and dispensed withall, as to certain particulars; so it be done ingenuously, with competent authority, in great necessity, and without partiality. But that which I intend here is, that in the rescission or dispensation of the Law, the Process be open and free, and such as shall preserve the Law and its sacredness, as well as the Person and his interest. The Laws of sparta forbad any man to be twice Admiral; but when their affairs required it, they made Araus titular, and Lysander supravisor of him, and Admiral to all real and effective purpoles: This wanted ingenuity, and laid a way open for them to despise the Law which was made patient of fuch a weak evafion. The Lacedemonian Embassador perswaded Pericles to turn the Tables of the Law, which were forbidden to be removed: and another ordained in a certain case, that the Laws should sleep 24 hours: a third decree'd that June should be called May, because the time of an election appointed by the Law was elapsed. These arts are against the ingenuity and simplicity of Laws and Law-givers, and teach the People to cheat in their obedience, when their Judges are so fraudulent in the administration of their Laws. Every Law should be made plain, open, honest, and fignificant; and he that makes a Decree, and intricates it on purpose, or by inconsideration lays a snare or leaves one there, is either an imprudent person, and therefore unfit to govern, or else he is a Tyrant and a Vultur. It is too much that a man can make a Law by an arbitrary power. But when he shall also leave the Law so that every of the ministers of Justice and the Judges shall have power to rule by a loofe, by an arbitrary, by a contradictory interpretation, it is intolerable. They that rule by Prudence should above all things see that the Patrons and Advocates of Innocence should be harmless, and without an evil fting.

3. Christian Simplicity relates to Promises and Acts of grace and favour; and its caution is, that all Promises be simple, ingenuous, agreeable to the intention of the Promiser, truly and effectually expressed, and never going less in the performance than in the promises and words of the expression: concerning which the cases are several. 1. First, all Promises in which a third or a second person hath no interest, that is, the Promises of kindness and civilities, are tied to pass into performance secundum equum & bonum; and though they may oblige to some small inconvenience, yet never to a great one: as, I will visit you to morrow morning, because I promised you, and therefore I will come, etiamsi non concoxero, although I have not flept my full fleep; but si febricitavero if I be in a fever, or have reason to fear one, I am disobliged. For the nature of such Promises bears upon them no bigger burthen than can be expounded by reasonable civilities, and the common expectation of kind, and the ordinary performances of just men, who do excuse and are excused respectively by all rules of reason proportionably to such small entercourses: and therefore although such Conditions be not expresfed in making Promises, yet to perform or rescind them by such Laws is not against Christian Simplicity. 2. Promises in matters of justice or in matters of grace, as from a Superiour to an infe-

because

riour, must be so singly and ingenuously expressed, intended and performed accordingly, that no condition is to be referved or supposed in SERM. them to warrant their non-performance but impossibility, or, that which is next to it, an intolerable inconvenience; in which cases we have a natural liberty to commute our promises, but so that we pay to the interessed person a good at least equal to that which we first promised. And to this purpose it may be added, that it is not against Christian Simplicity to express our Promises in such words which we know the interested man will understand to other purposes than I intend, so it be not less that I mean than that he hopes for. When our bleffed Saviour told his Disciples, that they should sit upon twelve thrones, they presently thought they had his Bond for a Kingdom, and dream'd of wealth and honour, power and a splendid Court; and Christ knew they did, but did not difintangle his Promise from the enfolded and intricate sence, of which his words were naturally capable: but he performed his Promise, to better purposes than they hoped for; they were Presidents in the conduct of Souls, Princes of God's people, the chief in sufferings, stood nearest to the Cross, had an elder brother's portion in the Kingdom of Grace, were the Founders of Churches, and dispensers of the Mysteries of the Kindom, and Ministers of the Spirit of God, and channels of mighty bleffings, Under-mediators in the Priesthood of their Lord, and their names were written in heaven: and this was infinitely better than to groan and wake under a head pressed with a golden Crown and pungent cares, and to eat alone, and to walk in a croud, and to be vexed with all the publick and many of the private evils of the people, which is the fum total of an earthly Kingdom.

When God promised to the obedient, that they should live long in the Land which he would give them, he meant it of the Land of Canaan, but yet reserved to himself the liberty of taking them quickly from that Land, and carrying them to a better. He that promises to lend me a Staff to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry me, hath not broken his Promise, nor dealt deceitfully. And this is God's dealing with mankind; he promises more than we could hope for; and when he hath done that, he gives us more than he hath promised. God hath promised to give to them that fear him all that they need, food and raiment: but he adds out of the treasures of his mercy, variety of food, and changes of raiment; some to get strength, and some to refresh; something for them that are in health, and some for the sick. And though the skins of Bulls and Staggs and Foxes and Bears could have drawn a veil thick enough to hide the apertures of fin and natural shame, and to defend us from heat and cold; yet when he addeth the fleeces of Sheep and Bevers, and the spoils of Silk-worms, he hath proclaimed that although his Promises are the bounds of our certain expectation, yet they are not the limits of his loving-kindness: and if he does more than he hath promised, no man can complain that he did otherwise, and did greater things than he faid. Thus God does; but therefore so also must we, imitating that example, and transcribing that copy of Divine truth, always remembring that his Promises are Tea and Amen. And although God often goes more, yet he never goes less; and therefore we must never go from our Promises, unless we be thrust from thence by disability, or let go by leave, or called up higher by a greater intendment and increase of kindness. And therefore when Solyman had sworn to Ibrahim Baffa that he would never kill him fo long as he were alive, he quitted himself but ill, when he sent an Eunuch to cut his throat when he slept,

because the Priest told him that Sleep was death. His act was false and

SER M. deceitful as his great Prophet.

But in this part of Simplicity we Christians have a most especial obligation: for our Religion being ennobled by the most and the greatest Promises, and our Faith made confident by the veracity of our Lord, and his Word made certain by Miracles and Prophecies, and voices from Heaven, and all the testimony of God himself; and that Truth it self is bound upon us by the efficacy of great endearments and so many precepts; if we shall suffer the Faith of a Christian to be an instrument to deceive our brother, and that he must either be incredulous or deceived, uncharitable or deluded like a fool, we dishonour the sacredness of the Institution, and become strangers to the spirit of Truth, and to the eternal word of God. Our Bleffed Lord would not have his Disciples to swear at all, (not in publick Judicature) if the necessities of the world would permit him to be obeyed. If Christians will live according to the Religion, the word of a Christian were a sufficient instrument to give testimony, and to make Promises, to secure a Faith; and upon that supposition Oaths were useless and therefore forbidden, because there could be no necessity to invoke God's name in Promises or Affirmations if men were indeed Christians, and therefore in that case would be a taking it in vain: but because many are not, and they that are in name, oftentimes are in nothing else, it became necessary that man should swear in Judgment and in publick Courts. But consider who it was that invented, and made the necessity of Oaths, of Bonds, of Securities, of Satutes, Extents, Judgments, and all the Artifices of humane disfidence and dishonesty. These things were indeed found out by men; but the necessity of these was from him that is the father of lies, from him that hath made many fair Promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger mischief, to cozen the more. For so does the Devil: He Promises rich Harvests, and blasts the Corn in the Spring: he tells his fervants they shall be rich, and fills them with Beggerly qualities, makes them base and indigent, greedy and penurious; and they that serve him intirely, as Witches and such miserable persons, never can be rich; if he promises Health, then men grow confident and intemperate, and do fuch things whereby they shall die the sooner, and die longer; they shall die eternally. He deceives men in their trust, and frustrates their hopes, and eludes their expectations; and his Promises have a period set, beyond which they cannot be true; for wicked men shall enjoy a fair fortune but till their appointed time, and then it ends in perfect and most accomplished misery: and therefore even in this performance he deceives them most of all, promising jewels, and performing coloured stones and glass-gems, that he may cozen them of their glorious inheritance. All frauduleut breakers of Promises dress themselves by his glass, whose best imagery is deformity and lies.

Sermon

SERM XXIV.

SERMON XXIV.

PART II.

Hristian Simplicity teaches openness and ingenuity in Contracts, and matters of buying and selling, Covenants, Associations, and all such Entercourses which suppose an equality of persons as to the matter of right and justice in the stipulation. Metal the discourse was the old Attick Law: and nothing is more contrary to Christian Religion than that the entercourses of Justice be direct snares, and that we should deal with men as men deal with foxes and wolves, and vermin; do all violence, and when that cannot be, use all craft and every thing whereby they can be made miserable.

"Η δόλω મેરે βίη ή αμφαδόν με μουφηδόν.

There are men in the world who love to smile, but that smile is more dangerous than the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm in Adria; for their purpose is only to deceive: they easily speak what they never mean; they heap up many arguments to perswade that to others which themselves believe not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts; they declaim against a thing which themselves covet; they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object which they would fain have to follow and overtake themsthey excuse a person dexterously where the man is beloved, and watch to surprize him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep. And these Hypocrises are so interwoven and imbroidered with their whole defign, that some Nations refuse to contract till their arts are taken off by the society of Banquets, and the good-natured kindnesses of festival Chalices: for so Tacitus observes concerning the old Germans; De asciscendis Principibus, de Pace & Bello in Conviviis consultant, tanquam nullo magis tempore ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus aut ad magnas incalescat : as if then they were more simple when they were most valiant, and were least deceitful when they were least themselves.

But it is an evil condition that a mans honesty shall be owing to his wine, and Vertue must live at the charge and will of a Vice. The proper Band of Societies and Contracts is Justice and Necessities, Religion and the Laws; the Measures of it are Equity, and our selves, and our own desserts in the days of our need, natural or forced: but the instruments of the exchange and conveiance of the whole entercourses is Words and Actions, as they are expounded by custom, consent, or understanding of the interessed person; in which if Simplicity be not severely preserved, it is impossible that humane Society can subsist, but men shall be forced to snatch at what they have bought, and take securities that men swear truly, and exact an oath that such is the meaning of the word; and no man shall think himself secure, but shall sear he is robbed, if he has

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not possession first; and it shall be disputed who shall trust the other, and SERM. neither of them shall have cause to be consident upon Bands, or Oaths, OrWienesses, or promises, or all the honour of men, or all the ingagements of Religion. Τουδείς 3 αν έτι πισούσαι δλυναιτο ύμαν, εδ' εί πανν ωρεθυ.

Lib. 8. Instit.

Lib. 8. Instit.

Lib. 8. Instit.

Lib. 9. I though he desires it, cannot be confident of the man that pretends truth, yet tells a lie, and is deprehended to have made use of the sacred name of Friendship or Religion, Honesty or Reputation, to deceive his bro-

> But because a man may be deceived by deeds and open actions as well as words; therefore it concerns their duty, that no man by an action on purpose done to make his brother believe a lie, abuse his perswasion and his interest. When Pythins the Sivilian had a mind to sell his Garden to Cannins, he invited him thither, and caused Fishermen (as if by custom) to fish in the channel by which the Garden stood, and they threw great ftore of fish into their Arbours, and made Cannius believe it was so every day; and the man grew greedy of that place of pleasure, and gave Pythis a double price, and the next day perceived himself abused. Actions of pretence and fimulation are like mares laid, into which the beafts fall though you pursue them not, but walk in the inquiry for their necessary provisions: and if a man fall into a snare that you have laid, it is no excuse to say, you did not tempt him thither. To say a snare is against the ingenuity of a good man and a Christian, and from thence he ought to be drawn; and therefore it is not six we should place a danger which our selves are therefore bound to hinder, because from thence we are obliged to rescue him. Vir bonus est qui prodest quibus patest, nocet nemini ; When we do all the good we can and do an evil to no man, then only we are accounted good men. But this prefence of an action fignifying otherwise than it looks for is only forbidden in matter of Contract, and the material interest of a second person. But when actions are of a double signification, or when a man is not abused or defeated of his right by an uncertain lign, it is lawful to do a thing to other purpoles than is commonly understood. Flight is a fign of fear; but it is lawful to fly when a man fears not. Circumcision was the seal of the Jewish Religion and yet Saint Paul circumcifed Timothy, though he intended he should live like the Gentile Christians, and not as do the Jews. But because that right did fignifie more things befides that one; he only did it to represent that he was no enemy of Moses Law, but would use it when there was just reason, which was one part of the things which the using of Circumcision could fignifie. So our Bleffed Saviour pretended that he would pass forth beyond Emans; but if he intended not to do it, yet he did no injury to the two Disciples, for whose good it was that he intended to make this offer: and neither did he prevaricate the strictness of Simplicity and Sincerity, because they were persons with whom he had made no contracts, to whom he had passed no obligation: and in the nature of the thing, it is proper and natural, by an offer to give an occasion to another to do a good action; and in case it succeeds not, then to do what we intended not; and so the offer was conditional. But in all cases of Bargaining, although the actions of themselves may receive naturally another sence, yet I am bound to follow that fignification which may not abuse my brother, or pollute my own honesty, or snatch or rifle his interest: Because it can be no ingredient into the commutation, if I exchange a thing which he understands not, and is by errour led into this mistake, and I hold

forth the fire, and delude him, and amuse his eye; for by me he is made sworse.

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But secondly, as our actions must be of a sincere and determinate signification in contract, so must our words: in which the rule of the old Roman honesty was this, Vterque, si ad eloquendum venerit, non plus quam semel eloquetur; Every one that speaks is to speak but once, that is, but one thing, because commonly that is truth; Truth being but one, but Errour and Falshood infinitely various and changeable; and we shall seldom see a man so stiffned with impiety as to speak little and seldom, and pertinaciously adhere to a single sence, and yet that at first and all the way after shall be a lie. Men use to go about when they tell a lie, and devise circumstances, and stand off at distance, and cast a cloud of words, and intricate the whole affair, and cozen themselves first, and then cozen their brother, while they have minced the case of Conscience into little particles, and swallowed the Lie by crums, so that no one passage of it should rush against the Conscience, nor do hurt, until it is all got into the belly, and unites in the effect; for by that time two men are abused, the Merchant in his Soul, and the Contracter in his Interest: and this is the certain effect of much talking, and little honesty. But he that means honestly must speak but once, that is, one truth, and hath leave to vary within the degrees of just prices and fair conditions, which because they have a latitude may be enlarged or restrained according as the Merchant pleases; save only he must never prevaricate the meafures of equity, and the proportions of reputation, and the publick. But in all the parts of this traffick let our words be the fignification of our thoughts, and our thoughts design nothing but the advantages of a permitted exchange. In this case the severity is so great, so exact, and so without variety of case, that it is not lawful for a man to tell a truth with a collateral design to cozen and abuse; and therefore at no hand can it be permitted to lie or equivocate, to speak craftily, or to deceive by fmoothness, or intricacy, or long discourses.

But this precept of Simplicity in matter of Contract, hath one step of feverity beyond this: In matter of Contract it is not lawful so much as to conceal the secret and undiscernible faults of the merchandize; but we must acknowledge them, or else affix prices made diminute and lesfened to such proportions and abatements as that fault should make. Caveat emptor is a good caution for him that buys, and it secures the seller in publick Judicature, but not in court of Conscience: and the old Laws of the Romans were as nice in this affair as the Conscience of a Titus Claudius Centimalus was commanded by the Augurs to pull down his house in the Culian mountain, because it hindered their obfervation of the flight of birds: He exposes his house to fail; Publius Calphurnius buys it, and is forced to pluck it down: But complaining to the Judges, he had remedy, because Clandius did not tell him the true state of the inconvenience. He that fells a house infected with the Plague or haunted with evil spirits, sells that which is not worth such a price which it might be put at, if it were in health and peace; and therefore cannot demand it, but openly, and upon publication of the evil. To which also this is to be added, That in some great faults, and such as have danger, (as in the cases now specified) no diminution of the price is sufficient to make the Merchant just and sincere, unless he tells the appendant mischief: because to some persons in many cases, and to all persons in some cases, it is not at all valuable; and they would not possess it is they might for nothing. Marcus Gratidianus bought a house of Sergius U 2 Orata

Orata, which himself had sold before: But because Sergius did not de-SERM. clare the appendant vaffalage and fervice, he was recompensed by the Judges. For although it was certain that Gratidianus knew it, because it had been his own, yet Oportuit ex bona side denunciari, said the Law, It concerned the ingenuity of a good man to have spoken it openly. In all cases it must be confessed in the price, or in the words: But when the evil may be personal, and more than matter of interest and money, it ought to be confessed, and then the goods prescribed; lest by my act I do my neighbour injury, and I receive profit by his damage. Certain it is, that ingenuity is the sweetest and easiest way; there is no difficulty or case of Conscience in that; and it can have no objection in it, but that possibly sometimes we lose a little Advantage which it may be we may lawfully acquire, but still we secure a quiet Conscience: and if the merchandise be not worth so much to me, then neither is it to him; if it be to him, it is also to me; and therefore I have no los, no hurt to keep it, if it be refused. But he that secures his own profit, and regards not the interest of another, is more greedy of a full purse than of a holy Conscience, and prefers gain before justice, and the wealth of his private before the necessity of publick society and commerce, being a son of earth, whose centre is it Self, without relation to Heaven that moves upon another's point, and produces flowers for others, and sends influence upon all the world, and receives nothing in return but a cloud of

perfume, or the smell of a fat sacrifice.

God sent Justice into the world, that all conditions in their several proportions should be equal; and he that receives a good should pay one; and he whom I serve is obliged to feed and to defend me in the same proportions as I serve; and Justice is a relative term, and supposes two persons obliged: and though fortunes are unequal, and estates are in majority and subordination, and men are wife or foolish, honoured or despised; yet in the entercourses of Justice God hath made that there is no difference. And therefore it was esteemed ignoble to dismis a servant when corn was dear; in dangers of shipwreck to throw out an unprofitable boy, and keep a fair horse; or for a wise man to snatch a plank from a drowning fool; or if the master of the Ship should challenge the board upon which his passenger swims for his life; or to obtrude false moneys upon others, which we first took for true, but at last discovered to be false; or not to discover the Gold which the merchant sold for Alchymy. The reason of all these is, because the Collateral advantages are not at all to be considered in matter of rights: and though I am dearest to my self, as my neighbour is to himself; yet it is necessary that I permit him to his own advantages, as I desire to be permitted to mine. Now therefore Simplicity and ingenuity in all Contracts is perfectly and exactly necessary, because its contrary destroys that Equality which Justice hath placed in the affairs of men, and makes all things private, and makes a man dearer to himself, and to be preferred before Kings and Republicks, and Churches; it destroys Society, and it makes multitudes of men to be but like heards of bealts, without proper instruments of exchange and fecurities of possession, without faith and without propriety; concerning all which there is no other account to be given, but that the rewards of Craft are but a little money, and a great deal of dishonour, and much suspicion, and proportionable scorn; watches and guards, spies and jealousies are his portion. But the crown of Justice is a fair life, and a clear reputation, and an inheritance there where Justice dwells fince the left the earth, even in the Kingdom of the Just, who shall call us

to judgment for every word, and render to every man according to his works. And what is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when the Lord taketh away his Soul? Tollendum effe ex rebus contrabendis onne mendacium; that's the sum of this Rule: No Falshood or deceit is to be endured in any Contract.

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5. Christian Simplicity hath also its necessity, and passes obligation upon us towards enemies in questions of Law or War. Plutarch commends Lylander and Philopemen for their craft and fubtilty in war; but commends it not as an ornament to their manners, but that which had influence into prosperous events: just as Ammiamus affirms, mullo difcrimine virtutis ac doli, prosperos omnes laudari debere bellorum eventus; whatsoever in war is prosperous, men use to commend. But he that is a good souldier is not always a good man. Callicratides was a good man, and followed the old way of downright hostility, *and so it persons the nye-in Lysand. Liven Te from But Lysander was navsey . is soopies and roug dia mouth our ra to πολέμε, a crafty man, full of plots, but not noble in the conduct of his Arms. I rememember Euripides brings in Achilles commending the ingenuity of his breeding, and the simplicity and nobleness of his own heart: * "Iphig. in

'Eya of if and egs inselectes teader χέρωνο έμαθον τος τρόπος άπλος έχεν,

The good old man Chiron was my Tutor, and he taught me to use simplici-. ty and honesty in all my manners. It was well and noble. But yet some wise men do not condemn all souldiers that use to get victories by deceit: Saint Austin allows it to be lawful; and S. Chrysostom commends Que 10. Super Commend it. These good men supposed that a crasty victory was better than a blou- de Sacerdoise. dy war: and certainly so it is, if the power gotten by craft be not exercifed in blood. But this business (as to the case of Conscience) will quickly be determined. Enemies are no persons bound by Contract and society, and therefore are not obliged to open hostilities and ingenuous prosecutions of the War; and if it be lawful to take by violence, it is not unjust to take the same thing by crast. But this is so to be understood, that, where there is an obligation, either by the Law of Nations or by special Contracts, no man dare to violate his faith or honour, but in these things deal with an ingenuity equal to the truth of peaceful promises, and acts of favour, and endearment to our relatives. Josephus tells Hist. 16.e.8. of the sons of Herod, that in their enmitties with their Uncle Pherora and Salome they had disagreeing manners of prosecution, as they had disagreeing hearts: some railed openly, and thought their enmity the more honest because it was not concealed; but by the ignorance and rude untutor'd malice lay open to the close designs of the elder brood of foxes. In this, because it was a particular and private quarrel, there is no rule of Conscience, but that it be wholly laid aside, and appealed with charity: for the openness of the quarrel was but the rage and indiscretion of the malice; and the close delign was but the craft and advantage of the malice. But in just Wars, on that side where a competent authority and a just Cause warrants the Arms, and turns the active opposition into the excuse and license of Defence, there is no restraint upon the actions and words of men in the matter of Sincerity, but that the Laws of Nations be strictly pursued, and all parties, promises, and Contracts observed religiously, and by the proportion of a private and Christian ingenuity. We find it by wife and good men mentioned with honour that the Romans, threw bread from the belieged Capitol into the stations of the Gauls, that they might think them full of corn: and that Agesilans discouraged the enemies,

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enemies, by cauling his own men to wear Crowns in token of a Naval victory gotten by Pifander, who yet was at that time destroyed by Conon: and that Flacens faid the City was taken by Amilius, and that Joshua diffembled a flight at Ai: and the Conful Quinding told aloud that the left wing of the enemies was fled, and that made the right wing fly : and that Valerius Levinus bragged prudently that he had killed Pyrrhus; and that others use the Ensigns of enemies colours and garments. Concerning which fort of actions and words, Agefilaus in Phitarch faid, & pedvor to diaceprofitable, and glorious. But to call a parley, and fall in upon the men that treat; to swear a peace, and watch advantage; to entertain Heralds, and then to torment them, to get from them notices of their party; thele are fuch actions which are dishonourable and unjust; condemned by the Laws of Nations, and effential Justice, and by all the world: And the Hungarian Army was destroyed by a Divine judgment, at the prayer and appeal of the Mahumetan enemy, for their violating their faith and honour, and prophaning the name of Christ, by using it in a solemn Oath to deceive their enemies: το μέν σπεισά μείσι άδικεν, τη Βτάν επ καταφε στέν this is to despise God, when men first swear by him, and then violate their Oaths or Leagues, their Treaties or Promises. In other cases liberty hath been taken by all men, and it is reproved by no man, fince the first simplicity of fighting and down-right blows did cease by the better-instructed people of the world; which was, as is usually computed, about the end of the second Carthaginian War: since that time, some few persons have been found so noble as to scorn to steal a victory, but had rather have the glory of a sharp sword than of a sharp wit.

But their fighting gallantry is extrinsecal to the Question of lawful or unlawful.

6. Thus we see how far the laws of Ingenuity and Christian Simplicity have put fetters upon our words and actions, and directed them in the paths of truth and nobleness; and the first degrees of permission of simulation are in the arts of War, and the cases of just hostility. But here it is usually inquired, Whether it be lawful to tell a lie or diffemble, to fave a good man's life, or to do him a great benefit. A Question which Saint Austin was much troubled withal, affirming it to be of the greatest difficulty: for he saw generally all the Doctors before his time allowed it; and of all the Fathers no man is noted to have reproved it but Saint Austin alone, and he also (as his manner is) with some variety: those which followed him, are to be accounted upon his score. And it relies upon such presidents which are not lightly to be disallowed. For so Abraham and Isaac told a lie in the case of their own danger to Abimelech; so did the Israelitish Midwives to Pharaoh; and Rahab concerning the Spies, and David to the King of Gath, and the Prophet that anointed Saul, and Elisha to Hazael, and Solomon in the fentence of the stoln child, concerning which Ireneus hath given us a rule, That those whose actions the Scripture hath remarked, and yet not chaftifed or cenfured, we are not without great reason and certain rule to condemn. But whether his rule can extend to this case is now to be enquired.

1. It is certain that children may be cozened into goodness, and sick men to health, and passengers in a storm into safety; And the reason of these is, Because not only the end is fair, and charitable, and just, but the means are such which do no injury to the persons which are to receive benefit; because there are persons who are either naturally or accidentally ignorant, and incompetent judges of affairs: and if they be also

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wilful, as fuch persons most commonly are, there is in art and nature left no way to deal with them, but with innocent, charitable, and artifi- SER M. cial deceptions; they are not capable of reason and solid discourses, and therefore either must be exposed to all harms, like Lions whelps when their nurse and Sire are taken in a Toil, or else be provided for in ways proportionable to their eapacity.

2. Sinners may not be treated with the liberty we take to children and fick persons, because they must serve God with choice and election; and therefore although a fick man may be cozened into his health, yet a man must not be cozened into his duty, which is no duty at all, or pleafing to God, unless it be voluntary and chosen : and therefore they are to be treated with arguments proper to move their wills, by the instrument of Understanding specially, being persons of persect faculties, and apt to be moved by the ways of health and of a man. It is an argument of infirmity, that in some cases it is necessary to make pretences; but those pretences are not made legitimate, unless it be by the infirmity of the interessed man with whom we do comply. My infirmity cannot make it lawful to make colours and images of things: But the infirmity of him with whom I deal may be such, that he can be defended or instructed no other way. But sinners that offend God by choice must have their choice corrected, and their understandings instructed, or else their

evil is not cured, nor their state amended.

3. For it is here very observable, that in entercourses of this nature we are to regard a double duty: the matter of Justice, and the rights of Charity; that is, that good be done by lawful instruments: for it is certain it is not lawful to abuse a man's understanding, with a purpose to gain him six pence; it is not fit to do evil for a good end; or to abuse one man, to preserve or do advantage to another. And therefore it is not sufficient that I intend to do good to my neighbour; for I may not therefore to tell a lie and abuse his credulity, because his Understanding hath a right as certain as his Will hath or as his Money; and his right to Truth is no more to be cozened and defrauded than his right unto his Money. And therefore such artificial entercourses are no ways to be permitted, but to fuch persons over whose understandings we have power and authority. Plato faid it was lawful for Kings and Governours to diffemble, because there is great necessity for them so to do: but it was but crudely said, so nakedly to deliver the doctrine: For in such things which the people cannot understand, and yet ought to obey, there is a liberty to use them as we use children, who are of no other condition or capacities than children; but in all things where they can and ought to chuse, because their understanding is only a servant to God, no man hath power to abuse their credulity and reason, to preserve their estates and peace. But because Children and Mad people and diseased are such whose understandings are in minority and under Tuition, they are to be governed by their proper instruments and proportions: Τὸ τὸ ἀ,α,θονωρειτίος ἀλιθείας, said Proclus; A good turn is to be preferred before a true saying: it is only true to fuch persons who cannot value truth, and prefer an intellectual before a material interest. It is better for children to have warm cloaths than a true Proposition, and therefore in all sences they and their like may be so treated: But other persons, who have distinct capacities, have an injury done them by being abused into advantages; and although those advantages make them recompence, yet he that is tied to make a man recom-pence hath done him injury and committed a fin, by which he was obliged to restitution; and therefore the man ought not to be cozened for his own good.

4. And now upon the grounds of this discourse we may more easily de-XXIV

SER M. termine concerning faving the life of a man by telling a lie in Judgment. Δει με συμπερίπεν τοις φίλοις, αλλά μέχει Dear, faid Pericles of Athens, when his friend defired him to fwear on his fide; I will affift my friend, Jo far as I may not dishonour God. And to lie in Judgment is directly against the being of Government, the honour of Tribunals, and the commandment of God; and therefore by no accident can be hallowed; it is xab αυτό φαῦλον κ, ψεκίον, as Aristotle said of a Lie, it is a thing evil in it self; that is, it is evil in the whole kind, ever fince it came to be forbidden by God. And therefore all those instances of crafty and delusive anfwers which are recorded in Scripture were extrajudicial, and had not this load upon them, to be deceiving of authority in those things where they had right to command or inquire, and either were before or besides the Commandment, not at all against it. And fince the Law of Muses forbad lying in judgment only, by that Law we are to judge of those actions in the Old Testament which were committed after its publication : and because in the Sermons of the Prophets, and especially in the new Testament, Christ hath superadded or enlarged the law of ingenuity and hearty simplicity, we are to leave the Old Scripture-precedents upon the ground of their own permissions, and finish our duty by the Rules of our Religion; which hath fo restrained our words, that they must always be just, and alwaies charitable; and there is no leave given to prevaricate, but to such persons, where there can be no obligation, persons that have no right, fuch with whom no contract can be made, fuch as children and fools and infirm persons, whose faculties are hindred or depraved. I remember that Secundus extremely commends Arria for deluding her husband's fears concerning the death of his beloved boy: She wiped her eyes, and came in confidently, and fate by her husband's bed-fide; and when the could no longer forbear to weep, her husband's fickness was excuse enough to legitimate that forrow, or else she could retire; but so long she forbore to confess the boy's death, till Cecinna Petus had so far recovered, that he could go forth to fee the boy, and need not fear with forrow to return to his disease. It was indeed a great kindness and rare prudence, as their affairs and laws were ordered: but we have better means to cure our fick; our Religion can charm the pattion, and enable the spirit to entertain and mafter a forrow. And when we have such rare supplies out of the storehouses of Reason and Religion, we have less reason to use these arts and little devices, which are arguments of an infirmity as great as is the Charity: and therefore we are to keep our selves strictly to the foregoing measures. Let every man speak the truth to his neeighbour, putting away lying, for we are members one of another: and, he as harmless as Doves, saith our Bleffed Saviour in my Text: which contain the whole duty concerning the matter of truth and fincerity. In both which places, Truth and Simplicity are founded upon Justice and Charity: and therefore where-ever a Lie is in any sence against Justice, and wrongs any man of a thing, his Judgment and his Reason, his right, or his liberty, it is expresly forbidden in the Christian Religion. What cases we can truly suppose to be belides these, the Law forbids not, and therefore it is lawful to say that to my felf which I believe not, for what innocent purpose I please, and to all those over whose understanding I have, or ought to have right.

Ephel. 4.25.

These cases are intricate enough, and therefore I shall return plainly to press the doctrine of Simplicity which ought to be so facred, that a man ought to do nothing indirectly which it is not lawful to own;

to receive no advantage by the fin of another, which I should account a dishonest if the action were my own; for whatsoever disputes may SERM; be concerning the lawfulness of pretending craftily in some rare and contingent cases, yet it is on all hands condemned, that my craft should do injury to my brother. I remember that when some greedy and indigent people forged a Will of Lucius Minutius Basilius, and joined M. Crassus, and D. Hortensius in the inheritance, that their power for their own interest might secure the others share; they suspended ching the thing to be a forgery, yet being not Principals and actors in the contrivance, alieni facinoris munusculum non repudiaverunt, refused not to receive a present made them by anothers crime; but so they entered upon a moiety of the estate, and the biggest share of the disho-We must not be crafty to another's injury so much as by giving countenance to the wrong; for Tortoiles and the Estrich hatch their Eggs with their looks only; and some have designs which a dissembling face, or an acted gesture can produce: but as a man may commit adultery with his eye, so with his eye also he may tell a lie, and fteal with one finger, and do injury collaterally, and yet defign it with a direct intuition upon which he looks with his face over his shoulder: and by whatsoever instrument my neighbour may be abufed, by the same instrument I sin if I do design it antecedently, or fall upon it together with something else, or rejoice in it when it is

7. One thing more I am to adde, that it is not lawful to tell a Lie in jest. It was a Vertue noted in Aristides and Epaminondas, that they would not lie, Ed' en maidris Tivi Tegra, not in sport. And as Christian Simplicity forbids all lying in matter of interest and serious rights : so there is an appendix to this Precept, forbidding to lie in mirth; for of every idle word a man shall speak he shall give account in the day of Judgment. And such are the jestings which S. Paul reckons amongst things uncomely. But among these, Fables, Apologues, Parables, or Figures, of Rhetorick, and any artificial instrument of instruction or innocent pleasure are not be reckoned. But he that without any end of Charity or institution shall tell lies only to become ridiculous in himself, or mock another, hath set something upon his Doomsday-book, which must be taken off by water or by fire, that is, by Repentance or a Judg-

Nothing is easier than Simplicity and Ingenuity: it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities and the proper vertue of men, the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to men as nails and teeth to Lions, for nothing but to do mischief; it is a rare instrument of institution, and a certain token of courage, the companion of goodness and a noble mind, the preserver of friendship, the band of society, the security of Merchants, and the blessing of trade; it prevents infinite of quarrels, and appeals to Judges, and suffers none of the evils of jealousie. Men by Simplicity converse as do the Angels, they do their own work, and fecure their proper interest, and serve the publick, and do glory to God: But Hypocrites and Liars and Dissemblers spread darkness over the face of affairs and make men, like the blind, to walk foftly and timoroufly: and crafty men, like the close air, suck that which is open, and devour its portion, and destroy its liberty: and it is the guise of Devils, and the dishonour of the Soul, and the canker of Society, and the enemy of Justice, and Truth, and Peace, of Wealth and Honour, of Courage and Mer-

chandise. He is a good man with whom a blind man may safely converse, SER M. dignus quicum in tenebris mices, to whom in respect of his fair treatings the darkness and light are both alike: But he that bears light upon the face, with a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an Angel of light when he means to do most mischief. Remember this only; That false colours laid upon the face besmear the skin and durty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it.

Apocal. 22. 15.

For without shall be dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murtherers, and idolaters, and who soever loveth and maketh a lie.

Sermon XXV.

THE

MIRACLES of the DIVINE MERCY.

Pfalm. 86. 5.

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee.

AN having destroyed that which God delighted in, that is, the beauty of his Soul, fell into an evil portion, and being feized upon by the Divine justice grew miserable, and con-demned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam, being banished and undone, went and lived a fad life in the mountains of *India*, and turned his face and his prayers towards Paradife; thither he fent his fighs, to that place he directed his devotions, there was his heart now where his felicity sometimes had been: but he knew not how to return thither, for God was his enemy, and by many of his Attributes opposed himself against him. God's Power was armed Attributes opposed himself against him. against him; and poor man, whom a flie or a fish could kill, was assaulted and beaten with a Sword of fire in the hand of a Cherubim. God's eye watched him, his Omniscience was man's accuser, his Severity was the Judge, his Justice the Executioner. It was a mighty calamity that man was to undergo, when he that made him armed himself against his creature, which would have died or turned to nothing, if he had but withdrawn the Miracles and the Almightiness of his power: If God had taken his arm from under him, man had perished. But it was therefore a greater evil when God laid his arm upon him and against him, and seemed to support him, that he might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadnesses God remembred his own creature, and pitied it, and by his Mercy rescued him from the hand of his Power, and the fword of his Justice, and the guilt of his Punishment, and the

diforder of his Sin, and placed him in that order of good things where he ought to have stood. It was Merry that preserved the noblest of God's SER M. creatures here belowshe who stood condemned and undone under all the other Attributes of God, was only faved and refcued by his Mercy : that it may be evident than God's mercy is above all his works, and above all ours, greater than the Creation, and greater than our Sins. As is his Majesty, so is his Mercy, that is, without measures and without rules, sitting in Heaven and silling all the world, calling for a duty that he may give a bleffing, making man that he may fave him, punishing him that he may preferve him. And God's Inflice bowed down to his Mercy, and all his Power passed into Mercy, and his Omniscience converted into care and watchfulness,into Providence and observation for man's avail; and Heaven gave its influence for man, and rained shows for our food and drink; and the Attributes and acts of God fate at the foot of Mercy, and all that mercy descended upon the head of man. For so the light of the world in the morning of the Creation was spread abroad like a curtain, and dwelt no-where, but filled the Expansium with a differnination great as the unfoldings of the air's looser garment, or the wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combination; but God gathered the beams in his hand, and united them into a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body of the Sun; and he lent fome to his weaker fifter that walks in the night, and guides a traveller, and teaches him to distinguish a house from a river, or a rock from a plain field. So is the Mercy of God, a valt Expansion and a huge Ocean; from eternal ages it dwelt round about the Throne of God, and it filled all that infinite distance and space that hath no measures but the will of God until God desiring to communicate that excellency and make it relative, created Angels, that he might have persons capable of huge gifts; and man, who he knew would need forgiveness. For so the Angels, our elder Brothers, dwelt for ever in the house of their Father, and never brake his Commandments; but we, the younger, like prodigals, forfook our Father's house, and went into a strange countrey, and followed stranger courses, and fpent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family, and came to need another portion. For, ever fince the Fall of Adam, who, like an unfortunate man, spent all that a wretched man could need, or a happy man could have, our life is Repentance, and Forgiveness is all our portion; and though Angels were objects of God's Bounty, yet man only is (in proper speaking) the object of his Mercy: And the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confin'd to a little ring, and dwelt here below, and here shall dwell below, till it hath carried all God's portion up to Heaven, where it shall raign and glory upon our crowned heads for ever and ever.

But for him that confiders God's Mercies, and dwells a while in that depth, it is hard not to talk wildly, and without art and order of difcourlings. Saint Peter talked he knew not what when he entered into a cloud with Jesus upon mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride upon the North-wind, and pass between the Sun And when we converse with a light greater than the Sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of Heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that attonement which reconciles God to man, and man to felicity, it will be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much, and say but little: and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord by dazeled eyes, and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles

XXV.

miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that run over, though SERM they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the showr no otherwise but by spilling, and inartificial expressions and runnings over. But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the Ocean, and to span the measures of Eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation and experience, and tell concerning God's Mercy as we do concerning God himself, that he is that great Fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are God's Mercy is all this; and we can only draw great lines of it, and reckon the Constellations of our Hemisphere in stead of telling the number of the Stars, we only can reckon what we feel and what we live by: And though there be in every one of these lines of life enough to engage us for ever to do God service, and to give him praises; yet it is certain there are very many Mercies of God upon us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel nor fee, nor understand as yet; but yet we are bleffed by them, and are preferved and secure, and we shall then know them when we come to give God thanks in the Festivities of an eternal Sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider,

1. That Mercy, being an emanation of the Divine goodness upon us, supposes us and found us miserable. In this account concerning the Mercies of God I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the Creation, or any thing of the Nature of man, nor tell how great an endearment God passed upon us that he made us Men, capable of Felicity, apted with rare instruments of Discourse and Reason, Passions and Defires, notices of Sense and reflexions upon that Sense; that we have not the deformity of a Crocodile, nor the motion of a Worm, nor the hunger of a Wolf, nor the wildnes of a Tigre, nor the birth of Vipers, nor the

life of Flies, nor the death of Serpents.

Our excellent Bodies and useful Faculties, the upright Motion and the tenacious Hand, the fair Appetites and proportioned Satisfactions, our Speech and our Perceptions, our acts of Life, the rare invention of Letters, and the use of Writing, and speaking at distance, the intervals of Restand Labour, (either of which, if they were perpetual, would be intolerable) the Needs of Nature and the provisions of Providence, Sleep and Buliness, refreshments of the Body and entertainments of the Soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of Bounty rather than Mercy: God gave us these when he made us, and before we needed Mercy; these were portions of our Nature, or provided to supply our consequent Necessities: but when we forfeited all God's favour by our fins, then that they were continued or restored to us became a Mercy, and therefore ought to be reckoned upon this new account. For it was a rare mercy that we were fuffered to live at all, or that the anger of God did permit to us one bleffing, that he did punish us so gently: But when the Rack is changed into an Ax, and the Ax into an Imprisonment, & the Imprisonment changed into an Enlargment, and the Enlargment into an Entertainment in the family, and this Entertainment passes on to an Adoption; these are steps of a mighty favour, and perfect redemption from our fin: and the returning back our own goods is a Gift, and a perfect Donative sweetned by the apprehensions of the calamity from whence every lesser punishment And thus it was that God punished us, and visited the began to free us. fin of Adam upon his posterity. He threatned we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved : We waited for death, and stood sentenced,

and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasines; and every day is a new Reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the SERM. Sun upon that day 5 and at last, when we must die by the irreversible decree, that death is changed into a fleep, and that fleep is in the before of Christ, and there dwells all peace and security, and it shall pass forth into glories and felicities. We looked for a judge, and behold a Saviour; we feared an Accuser, and behold an Advocate; we sate down in forrow, and rise in joy: We leaned upon Rhubarb and Aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian Fig-trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed; but the Rhubarb proved medicinal, and therough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings: and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of Thorns and bundles of Thistles, the Aconite, and the Briony; the Night-shade, and the Poppy; and at the root of these grew the healing *Plantain*, which rising up into a talness, by the friendly invitation of heavenly influence, turn'd about the tree of the *Cross*, and cured the wounds of the Thorns, and the curse of the Thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. Sific irascitur, quomodo convivatur ? If God be thus kind when he is angry, what is he when he feasts us with caresses of his more tender Kindness? All that God restored to us after the forseiture of Adam grew to be a double Kindness; for it became the expression of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciousness that was not to be altered, though we were; and that was it which we needed. That's the first general: All the Bounties of the creation became Mercies to us, when God continued them to us and restored them after they were forfeit.

2. But as a Circle begins every-where, and ends no-where, so do the Mercies of God: after all this huge progress, now it began anew, God is good and gracious, and God is ready to forgive. Now that he had once more made us capable of Mercies, God had what he defired, and what he could rejoice in, something upon which he might pour forth his Mercies. And, by the way, this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art, when I speak of that which hath no measure) God made us capable of one fort of his Mercies, and we made our felves capable of another. God is good and gracious, that is, desirous to give great gifts: and of this God made us receptive, first, by giving us natural possibilities, that is, by giving those gifts, he made us capable of more; and next, by restoring us to his favour, that he might not by our provocations be hindred from raining down his mercies. But God is also ready to forgive: and of this kind of mercy we made our felves capable, even by not deferving it. Our sin made way for his grace, and our infirmities called upon his pity; and because we sinned, we became miserable, and because we were miserable, we became pitiable; and this opened the other treasure of his Mercy-; that because our sin abounds, his grace may superabound. In this method

we must confine our thoughts;

1. Giving. 5Thou, Lord, art good, 2 plenteous in mercy to all them

2. Forgiving. and ready to forgive, S that call upon thee.

3. God's Mercies or the Mercies of his giving, came first upon us by mending of our Nature: For the ignorance we fell into is instructed, and better learned in spiritual notices than Adam's morning-knowledge in Paradife; our Appetites are made subordinate to the spirit, and the liberty of our Wills is improved, having the liberty of the fons of God; and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage than we lost in Adam: and as man lost Paradife, and got Heaven: so he lost the integrity of the first, & got the perfection of the second Adam: his living soul is changed into a quickning XXV.

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our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith. SER M and our passions and desires are entertained with Hope, and our Electi-

on is fanctified with Charity, and our first life of a temporal possession is passed into a better, a life of spiritual expectations; and though our first Parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life. But I instance in two great things in which humane nature is greatly advanced and passed on to greater perfections. The first is, That besides Body and Soul, which was the sum total of Adam's constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life, I vide Serm. II. mean the Spirit: so that now man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the Old man, that is, the old constitution, is the least part, and in its proper operations is dead, or dying, but the New man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a Christian; and that is renewed in us day by day. But secondly, Humane nature is so highly exalted and mended by that Mercy which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when he did come and actuate the purposes of this mission, and ascended up into Heaven, he carried humane nature above the feats of Angels, to the place whither Lucifer the son of the morning aspir'd to ascend, but in his attempt fell into Hell. For (so faid the Prophet) The son of the morning said, I will ascend into Heaven, and sit in the sides of the North, that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the East, called the sides or obliquity of the North. And as the feating of his Humane nature in that glorious feat brought to him all adoration, and the Majesty of God, and the greatest of his exaltation: So it was so great an advancement to us, that all the Angels of Heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition; not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are less than Angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equal honour of being fellow-fervants. This mystery is plain in Scripture, and the real effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah the father of Sampson saw an Angel, he worshipped him; and in the Old Testament it was esteemed lawful; for they were the Lievtenants of God, sent with the impresses of his Majesty, and took in his name the homage from us, who then were so much their inferiours. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the Lord of all the Angels, then they became our fellow-fervants, and might not receive worship from any of the fervants of Jesus, especially from Prophets and Martyrs, and those that are ministers of the testimony of Jesus. And therefore when an Angel appeared to Saint John, and he, according to the custom of the Jews, fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing, or not considering any thing to the contrary; the Angel reproved him, saying, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, & of thy brethren the Prophets, & of them which keep the Sayings of this book: worship God; or as S. Cyprian read it, worship Jesus. God and man are now only capable of worthip; but no Angel: God, effen-

> tially; Man, in the person of Christ, and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer: but Angels not so high, and therefore not capable of any religious worship. And this dignity of man, S. Gregory explicates fully: Quid est quod ante Redemptoris adventum adorantur ab hominibus [Ange-

> li] & tacent, post modum vero adorari refugiunt? Why did the Angels of

old receive worshippings, and were silent; but in the New Testament decline it, and fear to accept it? Nist quod Naturam nostram, quam prius despexerant,postquam hanc super se assumptam aspiciunt, prostratam sibi videri. pertimescunt; nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere aust sunt quam super fe, viz. in cali Rege venerantur. The reason is, Because they seeing our

Nature,

Judges 13.

Revel. 22.9. De bono Patientia.

Homil 8. in Evangel.

Nature, which they did so lightly value, raised up above them, they fear to see it humbled under them; neither do they any more despise the weak- SER M. ness which themselves worship in the King of Heaven. The same also is the sence of the Gloss of S. Ambrose, Ansbertus, Haymo, Rupertus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late: which being so plainly consonant to the words of the Angel, and consigned by the testimony of such men, I the rather note, that those who worship Angels, and make religious addresses to them may see what privilege themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in his nature relative to us is exalted far above all thrones and principalities and dominions. I need not add lustre to this: It is like the Sun the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams: and there is not in nature or the advantages of honour any thing greater than that we have the iffues of that Mercy which makes us fellow-fervants with Angels, too much honoured to pay them a Religious worship, whose Lord is a man, and he that is their King is our Brother.

4. To this, for the likeness of the matter, I add, that the Divine Mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of his favours, that we are not only fellow-ministers and servants with the Angels, and in our nature in the person of Christ exalted above them; but we also shall be their Judges. And if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there is in Honour no degrees, no priority or diffances; or characters of fame and nobleness. Christ is the great Judge of all the world, his Humane nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits; then shall the Devils, those Angels that fell from their first originals, be brought in their chains from their dark prisons, and once be allowed to see the light, that light that Thall confound them; while all that follow the Lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that Resurrection, shall be affestors in the Judgment. Know ye not (faith S. Paul) that ye shall judge Angels? And Tertullian speaking concern- 1 Cor. 6.31 ing Devils and accurred spirits De cultus minarum saith, Hi sunt Angeli quos judicaturi sumus, hi sunt Angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus; those Angels which we renounced in Baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lord's Glory, in the great day of Recompences. And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of Sentence that condemns the evil Angels shall also reward the good, and increase their glory: which because they derive from their Lord and ours, from their King and our elder Brother, the King of glories, whose glorious hands shall put the crown upon all our heads, we who shall be servants of that Judgment, and fothe way or other affilt in it, have a part of that Honour, to be Judges of all Angels, and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that Nature that sits upon the throne of God, that reigns over Angels, that shall sit in Judgment upon all the world. It is a great undecency that the son of a King should bear water upon his head, and dress Vineyards among the slaves; or to fee a wife man, & the guide of his Countrey, drink drunk among the meanest of his servants: but when members of Christ shall be made members of an harlot, and that which rides above a rain-bow stoops to an imperious whorish woman; when the foul that is sister to the Lord of Angels shall degenerate into the foolishness or rage of a beast, being drowned with the blood of the grape of made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies; we shall but strip our selves of that robe of honour with which Chrift hath invested and adorned our Nature; and carry that portion of Humanity which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some ca-

pacities.

SERM.

pacities above Angels into a portion of an eternal shame, and become less in all sences, and equally disgraced with Devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be, that we turned the glories of the Divine XXV. Mercy into the baseness of Ingratitude, and the amazement of suffering

the Divine vengeance. But I pass on.

5. The next order of Divine Mercies that I shall remark, is also an improvement of our Nature, or an appendage to it: For, whereas our constitution is weak, our Souls apt to diminution and impedite faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookedness, to stammering and forrows, to baldness and deformity, to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness of spirit; God hath in his infinite mercy provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness, to make recompence, and sometimes with an over-running proportion, for those natural defects, which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible, and our conditions intolerable. God gives to blind men better Memories. For upon this account it is that Ruffinus makes mention of Dydimus of Alexandria, who, being blind, was bleffed with a rare attention and fingular memory, and by prayer, and hearing, and meditating, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent Divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Mechliniensis, who, being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental Blindness, and from thence continually grew to fo quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory, that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen Rector of the College at Meclin, and was made Licenciate of Theology at Lovain, and Doctor of both the Laws at Colein, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent Learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances: Want of children he recompences with freedom from care; and whatfoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as a punishment of the sin of the Man, or the instrument of his Vertue or his security, and it is reckoned as a sufficient Antidote. God hath laid a severe law upon all Women, that in forrow they shall bring forth children: yet God hath so attempered that sorrow, that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow; and they have reason to rejoice in that state, the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise, that they shall be saved in bearing children. He that wants one eye hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him: and when-ever any man is afflicted with Sorrow, his Reason and his Religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil and persons that are obliged, run in to comfort him; and he may, if he will observe wisely, find so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many defigns of providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage and certain referves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affairs it often happens, that a single cross is a double bleffing, & that even in a temporal sence it is better to go to the bouse of mourning than of joys and festival egressions. Is not the affliction of Poverty better than the prosperity of a great and tempting Fortune? Does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and low spirit; retired thoughts, and under a sad roof? And is it not generally true, that Sickness it self is appayed with Religion and holy thoughts, with pious resolutions and penitential Prayers, with returns to God and to fober counsels? And if this be true, that God sends sorrow to cure Sin, and affliction be the hand-maid to Grace: it is also certain, that every sad contingency in

nature is doubly recompenced with the advantages of Religion, befides those intervening refreshments which support the Spirit, and re- SER M. freshits instruments, I shall need to instance but once more in this par-

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God hath fent no greater evil into the world than that in the sweat of our brows shall we eat our bread; and in the difficulty and agony, in the forrows and contention of our Souls, we shall work out our Salvation. But fee how in the first of these God hath out-done his own anger, and defeated the purposes of his wrath, by the inundation of his mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brows is so far from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. Is it not Labour that makes the Garlick and the Pulse, the Sycamore and the Cresses, the Cheese of the Goats and the Butter of the Sheep, to be savoury and pleafant as the Flesh of the Roe-buck, or the Milk of the Kine, the marrow of Oxen or the thighs of Birds? If it were not for Labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble nor so untempted. And as God hath made us beholden to Labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing it self ows to Labour many degrees of its worth and value. And therefore I need not reckon, that, be-fides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for Labour; Nights to cure the sweat of the Day, Sleep to ease our Watchfulness, Rest to alleviate our Burthens, and daies of Religion to procure our Rest: and things are so ordered, that Labour is become a Duty, and an act of many Vertues, and is not so apt to turn into a fin as its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of our Rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an unactive life: and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time; which yet passes over the active man light, as a dream or the seathers of a bird; while the disimployed is a disease, and like a long sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his Countrey. And therefore although in this particular, God hath been so merciful in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people, good and bad, who do not eat their bread in the sweat of their brows; yet this is but an over-running and an excess of the Divine Mercy; God did more for us than we did absolutely need; for he hath so disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled to it that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in Loving kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the Wine, and the Curse is gone out into a multiplied Bleffing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our Spiritual interest with the labours of our spirit, seems to most men to be so intolerable, that rather than pass under it they quit their hopes of Heaven, and pass into the portion of Devils. And what can there be to alleviate this forrow, that a man shall be perpetuallly follicited with an impure Tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a Lust, and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared Temptations; and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit and he must not desire what he cannot chuse but desire,

and he must not enjoy whatsoever he does violently covet, and must ne-SERM ver satisfie his appetite in the most violent importunities, but must therefore deny himself, because to do so is extremely troublesome? This seems to be an art of torture, and a device to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its intire constitution. For if it were not for this, we had nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of Heaven, but either all men, or no man must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man in order to beatitude, but Choice and Election, and nothing can ennoble the Choice but Love, and nothing can exercise Love but Difficulty, and nothing can make that Difficulty but the Contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And therefore when-ever any of you are tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with refifting the petulancy of temptation; you may be cured, if you will peafe but to remember and rejoice that now you have something of your own to give to God, something that he will be pleased to accept, something that he hath given thee that thou mailt give it him: for our money and our time, our days of feathing, and our days of forrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our longs, our vows and our offerings, our worthippings and protestations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the sum of our Religion, are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty.

Letius est quoties magno tibi constat honestum.

So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things such as we call Vertue and Vice, Reward and Punishment; and if we will not fuffer God to diftinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter; and his portion shall be blackness without variety, and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of divine Mercy, we are to account that, not only in nature, but in contingency and emergent events of Providence, God makes compensation to us for all the evils of chance and hostilities of accident, and brings good out of evil; which is that fo-lemn triumph which Mercy makes over Justice, when it rides upon a cloud, and crowns its darkness with a robe of glorious light. God indeed fiffered Joseph to be fold a bond-flave into Egypt; but then it was that God intended to crown and reward his chaffity: for by that means he brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention, and he was a conqueror. Then God sent him to prison; but still that was Mercy, it was to make way to bring him to Pharoah's Court. And God brought famine upon Canaan, and troubled all the fouls of Jacob's family: and there was a plot laid for another Mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Joseph's glory. And then God brought a great evil upon their posterity, and they groaned under Task-masters: but this God changed into the Miracles of his Mercy, and suffered them to be afflicted that he might do ten Miracles for their fakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest Treason that ever was committed, the Redemption of the world from the fact of Judas; God loving to defeat the malice of man and the arts of the Devil by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy?

It is a fad calamity to fee a Kingdom spoiled, and a Church afflicted; the Priests slain with the sword, and the blood of Nobles mingled with SERM. cheaper sand; Religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; Government consounded, and Laws assumed; Judges decreeing causes in fear and coverousness, and the Ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is Sacred, and setting fire upon the fields, and turning in little foxes on purpole to destroy the wineyards. And what shall make recompence for this heap of sorrows, whenever God shall fend such swords of fire ? Even the mercies of God, which then will be made publick, when we shall hear such afflicted people sing, In convertendo captivitatem Sion, with the voice of joy and festival Eucharift, among such as keep holy-day; and when Peace shall become sweeter, and dwell the longer. And in the mean time it serves Religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and God shall crown them, and men shall grow wifer and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take fanctuary in holy living, and be taught Temperance by their want, and Patience by their fuffering, and Charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the duty of their relations; and at last the fecret worm that lay at the root of the plant shall be drawn forth, and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant Vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescencies, and spend it self in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine-press, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full Vintage : But when the Lord of the Vine had caused the dreffers to cut the wilder plant, and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of use-less leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted Province eured of its surfeits, and punished for its fins, and bleeds for its long Riot, and is left ungoverned for its Disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness;and when the Sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staff, and his anger into mercy.

Had not David suffered more, if he had suffered less? and had he not been miserable, unless he had been afflicted? He understood it well, when he faid, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. He that was rival to Crassus when he stood Candidate to command the Legions in the Parthian War, was much troubled that he missed the dignity; but he faw himself blessed that he scaped the death, and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the fad news arrived at Rome. The Gentleman at Marfeilles cursed his stars that he was absent when the Ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a wind and missed it; but he gave thanks to the Providence that bleft him with the cross, when he knew that the Ship perished in the Voyage, and all the men were drowned. And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem that longed to become glad mothers, and for want of children would not be comforted, yet, when Titus facked the City, found the words of Jefus true, Bleffed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. And the world being governed with a rare variety, and changes of accidents and providence; that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a bleffing bigger than we hoped for then when we were angry with God for hindring us to perish in pleasant ways, or when he was contriving to pour upon thy head a mighty blessing.

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O Do not think the Judge condemns you when he chides you, nor think SERM. to read thy own final sentence by the first half of his words. Stand still, and see how it will be in the whole event of things: let God speak his mind out; for it may be this sad beginning is but an art to bring in, or to make thee to esteem, and entertain, and understand the bleffing.

They that love to talk of the Mercies of the Lord, and to recount his good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by fuch Appellatives which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: He is the Father of the fatherless, & an Avenger of the widow's cause; He standeth at the right hand of the poor, to save his soul from unrighteous Judges; and he is with us in tribulation. And upon this ground let us account whether Mercy be not the greater ingredient in that death and deprivation, when I lose a man, and get God to be my Father; and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean upon him, and becomes my Patron and my Guide, my Advocate and Defender. And if in our greatest misery God's mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose him to be in the endearment of his Loving-kindness? if his evil be so transparent, well may we know that upon his face dwells glory, and from his eyes light and perpetual comforts run in channels larger than the returns of the Sea, when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course by the violence of a tempest from the North. The sum is this: God intends every accident should minister to Vertue, and every Vertue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the Divine goodness: and therefore if our forrows do not pass into comforts, it is besides God's intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that Mercy which would fave us by all means and all varieties, by health and by fickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we chuse and by what we fear; that as God's Providence rules over all chances of things and all defigns of men, so his Mercy may rule over all his Providence.

SERMON XXVI.

Part II.

OD having by these means secured us from the evils of Nature and contingencies, and represented himself to be our Father, which is the great endearment and tie, and expression of a natural, unalterable and essential kindness; he next makes provisions for us to supply all those Necessities which himself hath made. For even to make Necessities was a great circumstance of the Mercy; and all the relishes of Wine, and the savourines of Meat, the Sweet and the Fat, the Pleasure and the Satisfaction, the restitution of Spirits, and the strengthening of the Heart, are not owing to the Liver of the Vine or the Kidneys of Wheat, to the blood of the Grape or the strength of the Corn, but to

the apperite or the necessity: And therefore it is, that he that sits at a full Table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his SERM. digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of nature's intervals: he loses the blessing of his daily bread, and leans upon his table as a sick man upon his bed, or the lion in the grass, which he cannot feed on: but he that wants it, and fits down when Nature gives the fign, rejoyces in the health of his hunger, and the tafte of his meat, and the strengthning of his spirit, and gives God thanks, while his bones and his flesh rejoyce in the provisions of nature and the bleffing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy and the decays of old age the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections upon their acts of sense? and when desire fails, pre- Eccles. 12. fently the mourners go about the streets. But then, that those defires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordinary and extraordinary, by forelight and contingency, according to necessity and up unto conveniency, until we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger than the Bow in the clouds, and richer than the trees of Eden, which were permitted to feed our miserable Father. Is not all the Earth our Orchard and our Granary, our Vineyard and our Garden of pleasure? and the face of the Sea is our traffick, and the bowels of the Sea is our Vivarium, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendant needs; and all the face of Heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitful showrs and fair refreshments. And when God made provision for his other creatures, he gave it of one kind, and with variety no greater than the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or fitting down with his draught of blood, or walking upon his portion of grass: But man hath all the food of beafts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food, and the food of Angels, and the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth; and every part of his body bath a provision made for it: and the smoothness of the Olive and the juice of the Vine refresh the heart and make the face chearful, and serve the ends of joy and the festivity of man; and are not only to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appeale a passion and allay a forrow. It is an infinite variety of meat with which God furnishes out the table of mankind. And in the covering our fin, and cloathing our nakedness, God passed from Fig-leaves to the Skins of beasts, from Aprons to long Robes, from Leather to Wooll, and from thence to the warmth of Furrs, and the coolness of Silks; he hath dressed not only our needs, but hath fitted the several portions of the year, and made us to go dres-fed like our Mother, leaving off the Winter Sables when the florid Spring appears, and as foon as the Tulip fades we put on the robe of Summer, and then thear our Sheep for Winter: and God uses us as fo-Seph did his brother Benjamin; we have many changes of raiment, and our mess is five times bigger than the provision made for our brothers of the Creation. But the Providence and Mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God running over the tables of the rich, God hath also made provisions for the poorest person; fo that if they can but rule their defires, they shall have their tables furmilhed. And this is licured and provided for by one promile and two duties, by our own Labour and our Brother's Charity : and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women in the world provided for, and fed and cloathed till they die? and was it not always fo from the first

morning of the creatures; and that a man is starved to death is a violence ER M. and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldome as for a man to I. have but one eye: and if our being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdome and admire the mercies of our Almighty Father. But these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that God hath made such strange provisions for our health? fuch infinite differences of Plants, and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by mere chance, or by inspiration? Either of which is the miracle of Providence, secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of Heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the Divine Mercy that discovered to man the secrets of Spagyrick medicines, of Stones, of Spirits, and the results of 7 or 8 Decoctions, and the strange effects of accidental mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the fecret fanctuary of hidden causes and secret natures, and being laid open by the concourse of 20 or 30 tittle accidents, all which were ordered by God as certainly as are the first Principles of Nature, or the descent of sons from the Fathers in the most noble Families.

> But that which I shall observe in this whole affair, is, That there are both for the provision of our tables and the relief of our sicknesses, so many miracles of Providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation we bear to Heaven; and the poor man need not be troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the Sun is up; for he hath found to this day he was not degeived : and then he may rejoyce, because he sees by an effective probation, that in Heaven a decree was made, every day to fend him provisions of meat and drink. And that is a mighty mercy when the circles of Heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosom of care and nourishment, & the wisdome of God is daily busied to serve his Mercy, as his Mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there where the Diseases are most popular? and every Countrey is best provided against its own evils. Is not the Rhubarb found where the Sun most corrupts the Liver Land the Scabious by the shore of the Sea, that God might cure as foon as he wounds? and the inhabitants may fee their remedy against the Laprosic and the Scurvy before they feel their sick-And then to this we may add Natures commons and open fields, the shores of Rivers and the strand of the Sea, the unconfined air, the wilderness that hath no hedge; and that in these every man may hunt and fowl and fish respectively; and that God sends some Miracles and extra-ordinary blessings so for the publick good that he will not endure they should be inclosed & made several. Thus he is pleased to dispense the Manna of Calabria, the Medicinal waters of Germany, the Muscles at Sluce at this day, and the Egyptian Beans in the Marishes of Albania, and the Salt at Troop of old; which God, todeftat the Coverousness of man, and to spread his mercy over the face of the indigent, as the Sun featters his beams over the bosome of the whole earth, did so order, that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosome of Heaven was open, but when man gathered them into fingle handfuls and made them impropriate, God gathered his hand into his bosome, and bound the Heavens with ribs of brass, and the earth with decrees of iron, and the blefling reverted to him that gave it, lince they might nor receive it to whom it was fent. And in general, this is the excellency of this Mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied and secured by a Promise which God cannot break: but he that cannot break the laws of his own Promites, can break the Laws of Nature that he may perform his promife, and he will do a Miracle rather than forfake thee in thy needs : fo that our feerity and

the relative mercy is bound upon us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God that he hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if God is so merciful in making fair provisions for our less noble part in order to the transition toward our Countrey, we may expect that the mercies of God have rare arts to fecure to us his designed bounty in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite Mercy of the Almighty Father of Mercies, that he hath appointed to us fuch a Religion that leads us to a huge Felicity through pleasant ways. For the Felicity that is defigned to us is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while we are so ignorant, as not to understand it, we are also so foolish, as not to delire it with passions great enough to perform the little conditions of its purchase. God therefore knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we would be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our Salvation upon us by the endearment of Temporal prosperities; and because we love this world so well, God hath so ordered it, that even this world may secure the other. And of this, God in old time made open profession: for when he had secretly designed to bring his people to a glorious immortality in another world, he told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger than the capacity of their thoughts, or of their Theology; but told them that which would tempt them most, & endear obedience; If you will obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land; Ye shall possess a rich countrey, ye shall triumph over your Enemies, ye shall have numerous Families, bleffed Children, rich Granaries, over-running Wine-preffes. For God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and feel; it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whither before they come they must die, and lose all desire and all capacities of enjoyment. But this design of God, which was bare-faced in the days of the Law, is now in the Gospel inter-woven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of Faith and Reason) into every Vertue; and temporal advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every Christian Grace. For so the richest Tissue dazzels the beholders eye when the Sun reflects upon the metal, the filver and the gold weaved into fantastick imagery, or a wealthy plainness; but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought upon cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies: So is the imbroidery of our Vertue. The Glories of the spirit dwell upon the face and vestment, upon the fringes and the borders, and there we see the Beril and the Onyx, the Jasper and the Sardonix, order and perfection, love, and peace, and joy, mortification of the Passions and ravishment of the Will, adherencies to God and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Chost, and longings after Heaven, Humility and Chastity, Temperance and Sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the cloaths of the Soul, that it may not be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation: But through these rich materials a thred of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoyce; they are wrought upon fecular content and material satisfactions; and now we cannot be happy unless we be pious, and the Religion of a Christian is the greatest security, and the most

SER M, XXVI. SERM. XXVI. Life of HJefm, Part. 3. Difc, 14.

SERM. wife, and beloved, in the whole world. I shall now remark only two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have other-where represented.

I. The whole Religion of a Christian as it relates to others is nothing but Justice and Mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit: and upon this supposition what evil can come to a just and a merciful, to a necessary and useful person? For the first permission of evil was upon the stock of Injustice. He that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another man's right must venter the loss of his own; and when I put my brother to his desence, he may chance drive the evil so far from himself, that it may reach me. Laws and Judges, private and publick Judicatures, Wars and Tribunals, Axes and Wheels were made, not for the righteous, but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useles, if men did do as they would

willingly suffer.

2. And because there is no evil that can befall a just man, unless it comes by injury and violence, our Religion hath also made as good provisions against that too, as the nature of the thing will suffer. For by Patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by Hope and Faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the mind, the envy and the fretfulness that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man: and when we turn all the Passion into Charity, and God turns all the Suffering into Reward, there remains nothing that is very formidable. So that our Religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men, (and in our Religion no man can suffer as a malesactor, if he follows the Religion truly:) and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the Graces of this Discipline turn them into Vertues and Rewards, and make them that in their event-they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3. But then when we consider that the Religion of a Christian consists in doing good to all men, that it is made up of Mercies and Friendships, of friendly conventions and assemblies of Saints, that all are to do publick works for necessary uses, that is, to be able to be beneficial to the publick, and not to be burthensome to any, where it can be avoided; what can be wished to men in relation to others, and what can be more beneficial to themselves, than that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the publick does need, such whom Princes and Nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their several conditions; that they are so well provided for, that unless a persecution disables them, they cannot only maintain themselves, but oblige others to their Charity? This is a temporal good which all wise men reckon as part of that selicity which recompences all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbour-hood and amity, where men are most valued and most secure.

4. To this we may adde this material consideration: That all those Graces which oblige us to do good to others are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to our selves. It is a huge nobleness of Charity to give Alms, not only to our brother, but for him. It is the Christian sacrifice, like that of Job, who made oblations for his Sons when they feasted each other, searing lest they had sinned against God:

and

and if give Alms, and fast and pray in behalf of my Prince or my Patron, my friend or my children, I do a combination of holy actions, SERM. which are of all things that I can do the most effectual intercession for XXVI. him whom I so recommend. But then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the Divine Mercy to secure bleffing to our selves. That I am a person fit to interceed and pray for him, must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept; so that before I be fit to pray and interpose for him, I must first become dear to God, and my Charity can do him no good for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to God, that so he may the rather hear me; and when I fast, it is first an act of Repentance for my self, before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my brother a single benefit by doing my felf a double one. And it is also so ordered, that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then he will hear me for my self, though I say nothing in my own behalf: and our prayers are like Jonathan's arrows; If they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for, and I have not only the comfort of rejoycing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy. certain it is, that the charitable prayer of another can never want what it asks, or, in stead of it, a greater bleffing. The good man that saw his poor brother troubled because he had nothing to present for an offering at the Holy Communion, (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindness for Christs poor members, with which themselves were incorporated with fo mysterious an union) and gave him money that he might present for the good of his Soul, as other Christians did, had not only the reward of Alms, but of Religion too; and that Offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two Souls. For as I fin when I make another sin; so if I help to do a good, I am sharer in the gains of that talent, and he shall not have the less, but I shall be rewarded upon his And this was it which David rejoiced in, Particeps sum omnium timentium te; I am a partner, a companion of all them that fear thee, I share in their profits. If I do but rejoyce at every grace of God which I see in my brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace; and we need not envy the excellency of another; it becomes mine as well as his: and if I do re-joyce, I shall have cause to rejoyce. So excellent, so full, so artificial is the Mercy of God, in making and seeking and finding all occasions to do us good.

. The very Charity and Love and Mercy that is commanded in our Religion is in it self a great excellency, not only in order to Heaven, but to the comforts of the earth too, and fuch without which a man is not capable of a bleffing or a comfort; and he that fent Charity and Friendships into the world, intended Charity to be as relative as Justice, and to do its effect both upon the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a bleffing to a kind Father, when his children do well, and every degree of prudent love which he bears to them is an endearment of his joy; and he that loves them not, but looks upon them as burthens of necessity, and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoycings and the pleasures of kindness which they feast withal who love to divide their fortunes amongst them, because they have already divided large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in this relation; but it is true in all the excellency of Friendship: and every man rejoyces twice when he hath a partner of his joy. A friend shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two chanels

SERM. XXVI.

divide the River, and lessen it into Rivulets, and make foordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Sirian Star; but two torches do not divide, but increase the flame: and though my tears are the sooner dried up when they run upon my friends cheeks in the surrows of compassion; yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories and make them radiant like the golden Candlesticks that burn before the throne of God, because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now upon this account which is already fo great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral iffues and little streams of comfort which God hath made to iffue from that Religion to which God hath obliged us; fuch as are mutual comforts, visiting sick people, instructing the ignorant, and so becoming better instructed and fortified and comforted our selves by the instruments of our brother's ease and advantages; the glories of converting Souls, of rescuing a sinner from bell, of a milerable man from the grave, the honour and nobleness of being a good man, the noble confidence & the bravery of Innocence, the ease of Patience, the quiet of Contentedness, the rest of Peacefuluess, the worthiness of Forgiving others, the greatness of spirit that is in despising Riches, and the sweetness of spirit that is in Meekness and Humility: these are Christian Graces in every fence; favours of God, and iffues of his bounty and his mercy. But all that I shall now observe farther concerning them is this, That God hath made these necessary; he hath obliged us to have them under pain of damnation; he hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world, that if we will not, he hath threatned to destroy us; which is not a desire or aptness to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it, that we cannot perish, unless we desire it our selves; and unless we will do our selves a mischief on purpose to get Hell, we are secured of Heaven; and there is not in the nature of things any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity upon creatures that can chuse, than to make that which they should naturally chuse be spiritually their duty: and then he will make them happy hereafter, if they will fuffer him to make them happy here. But hard by stand another throng of Mercies that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them; for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this Felicity.

9. God, that he might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chains, and bound us not only with the bracelets of Love and the deliciousness of Hope, but with the ruder cords of Fear and Reverence, even with all the innumerable parts of a restraining grace. For it is a huge aggravation of humane calamity to confider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of his Religion, and knows it to be the way of honour aud felicity, and that to prevaricate his holy Sanctions is certain death and difgrace to eternal Ages; yet that some men shall despise their Religion, others shall be very wary of its Laws, and call the Commandments a burthen, and too many with a perfect choice shall delight in death and the ways that lead thither; and they chuse money infinitely, and to rule over their brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong, and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they defire, and love it fondly, & be restless in all things but where they perish. If God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous & merciful grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our Lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of Sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the

deluge

deluge of fin universally, as the old World did in that storm of the Divine anger, the Floud of waters. But thus God suffers but few Adulteries in the SER Mworld, in respect of what would be it all men that define to be Adulterers had power and opportunity: and yet some men and very many women are by modesty and natural shamefacedness chastised in their too forward appetites, or the Laws of man, or publick reputation, or the undecency and unhandsome circumstances of sin, check the desire, and make it that it cannot arrive at act. For so have I seen a busie flame sitting upon a sullen coal turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbourhood, and reach at a heap of prepared straw, which like a bold temptation called it to a reftless motion and activity; but either it was at too big a distance, or a gentle breath from Heaven diverted the sphere and the ray of the fire to the other fide, and so prevented the violence of the burning, till the flame expired in a weak consumption and died turning into smoke and the coolness of death and the harmlesness of a Cynder. And when a man's desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and pass on in a smooth channel of opportunity, God oftentimes hinders the Lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port and entring into action by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a fudden disability, by urneasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very weariness of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the delire, burfting it felf with its fulness into dissolution and a remis easiness, by a sentence of Scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interven. tions of the Spirit of Grace chaftifing the crime, and representing its appendant mischiefs, and its constituent disorder and irregularity: and after all this, the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose hath rolled it felf into so much uneafiness and unquiet collections, that the man is grown ashamed and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not less than infinite in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbourhood and temptation. For if the Hyana and a Dog should be thrust into the same Kennel, one of them would soon find a grave, and it may be both of them their death. So infallible is the ruine of most men, if they be shewed a temptation : Nitre and Resin, Naphtha, and Bitumen, Sulphur and Pitch are their constitution; and the fire passes upon them infinitely, and there is none to secure them. But God, by removing our fins far from us, as far as the East is from the West, not only putting away the guilt, but fetting the occasion far from us extremely far, so far that sometimes we cannot sin, and many times not easily, bath magnified his mercy, by giving us fafety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses, if I should confider concerning the variety of God's grace; his preventing and accompanying, his inviting and corroborating grace; his affilting us to will, his enabling us to do; his sending Angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company, to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make him by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with Vertue, because they have mingled that Vertue with a just and a fair interest, to some men by making Religion that thing they live upon, to others the means of their reputation and the fecurities of their honour, and thousands of ways more, which every prudent man that watches the ways of God cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of Mercy; for he that is to pass through an infinite, must not dwell upon every little line of life.

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II.

10. The next order of Mercies is such which is of so pure and unmingled ERM. constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and dispofuch conditions which it self creates and produces in the suscipient; I mean the Mercies of the divine Predestination. For was it not an infinite mercy that God should predestinate all mankind to Salvation by Jesus Christ, even when he had no other reason to move him to do it, but because man was miserable, and needed his pity? But I shall instance only in the intermedial part of this mysterious Mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of Christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish Priest? What distinguished me from another, that my Father was severe in his discipline, and careful to bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and I was not exposed to the carelesness of an irreligious Guardian, and taught to steal and lie, and to make sport with my infant vices and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying Chrysoms, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience? What had you done of good, or towards it, that your were not condemned to that stupid ignorance which makes the Souls of most men to be little higher than Beasts, and who understand nothing of Keligion and noble Principles, of Parables and wife fayings of old men? And not only in our Cradles, but in our Schools and our Colleges, in our Friendships and in our Marriages, in our Enmities and in all our conversation, in our Vertues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferiour, there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differences. Or it may be my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he kill'd a man; but God did not suffer me to do so: He fell down and died with a little disorder; I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins: He did amis once, and was surprised in that disadvantage; I fin daily, and am still invited to Repensance: He would fain have lived and amended; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the Angel of his wrath to execute his anger upon a finful people, we are encompassed with fune-rals, and yet the Angel hath not smitten us: what or who makes the difference? We shall then see when, in the separations of Eternity, we sitting in glory shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roaring in the seats of the Reprobate; we shall then perceive that it is even that Mercy which hath no cause but it self, no measure of its emanation but our milery, no natural limit but Eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an esfential and an unalterable goodness, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

11. Lastly, All the Mercies of God are concentred in that which is all the Felicity of man: and God is so great a lover of Souls, that he provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations and weak discoursings. The particulars I shall remark are these: 1.God's Mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies of men; so that in the conventions and assemblies of Hereticks, (as the word is usually understood, for erring and mistaken people) although their Doctrines are such, that, if men should live according to their proper and natural consequences, they would live impioully, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but Truth, while

in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but Error, that in the defiance and contradiction of their own Doctrines they live according to SERM its contradictory. He that believes Contrition alone with Confession to a Priest is enough to expiate ten thousand fins, is surnished with an excuse easie enough to quit himself from the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap ways of buying off his Penances for a little money, even for the greatest sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act for which he must repent; since Repentance is a duty so soon, so certainly, and so easily performed. But these are notorious Doctrines of the Roman Church: and yet God so loves the Souls of his creatures, that many men who trust to these doctrines in their discourses, dare not rely upon them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly as if they did not believe so foolishly. He that tells that, antecedently, God hath to all humane choice decreed men to Heaven or to Hell, takes away from men all care of the Way because they believe that he that infallibly decreed that End hath unalterably appointed the Means, and some men that talk thus wildly live foberly, and are over-wrought in their understanding by some secret art of God, that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be affifted in his choice, and faved by the Divine mercies. And there is no fect of men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses to cure the venom of their Doctrine: and therefore although the adherent and constituent poilon is notorious, and therefore to be declined; yet because it is collaterally cured and over-powered by the torrent and wildom of God's Mercies, the men are to be taken into the Quire, that we may all join, giving God praile for the operation of his hands, 2. I faid formerly, that there are many secret and undiscerned Mercies by which men live, and of which men can give no account till they come to give God thanks at their publication: and of this sort is that mercy which God reserves for the Souls of many millions of men and women concerning whom we have no hopes, if we account concerning them by the usual proportions of revelation and Christian commandments; and yet we are taught to hope some strange good things concerning them by the analogy, and general rules of the Divine Mercy. For what shall become of ignorant Christians, people that live in Wildernesses and places more defart than a primitive Hermitage? people, that are baptized, and taught to go to Church, it may be, once a year? people that can get no more knowledge, they know not where to have it, nor how to defire it? and yet that an eternity of pains shall be consequent to fuch an ignorance, is unlike the Mercy of God; and yet that they should be in any disposition towards an eternity of intellectual joys, is no-where fet down in the leaves of revelation: And when the Jews grew rebellious, or a filly woman of the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and finned, and punished with death, we usually talk as if that death passed on to a worse; but yet we may arrest our thoughts upon the Divine Mercies, and consider that it is reasonable to expect from the Divine Goodness, that no greater forfeiture be taken upon a Law than was expressed in its fanction and publication. He that makes a Law, and binds it with the penalty of stripes, we say he intends not to afflict the difobedient with scorpions and axes; and it had been hugely necessary that God had scar'd the Jews from their sins by threatning the pains of Hell to them that disobeyed, if he intended to inflict it: for although many men would have ventured the future, since they are not affrighted with the prefent and visible evil; yet some persons would have had more Philosophical

and Spiritual apprehentions than others, and have been infallibly cured SER M. in all their temptations with the fear of an eternal pain: and however whether they had or no, yet fince it cannot be understood how it confilts with the Divine Justice to exact a paid bigger than he threatned greater than he gave warning of, we are sure it is a great way off from God's Mercy to do so. He that usually imposes less, and is loth to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an everual punishment, when the most that he threatned and gave notice of was but a temporal. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this: That we may publickly worthip this mercy of God which is kept in fectet, and that we be not too forward in fentencing all Heathers, and prevaricating fews to the eternal pains of Hell; but to hope that they have a portion in the fecrets of the Divine Mercy, where also, unless many of us have some little portions deposited, our condition will be very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accursed a thing it is to perish in the eternal flames of Hell, and therefore he is not easie to inflict it: and if the joys of Heaven be too great to be expected upon too easie terms, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to pass lightly upon persons who cannot help themselves, and who, if they were helped with clearer revelations, would have avoided them. But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the Divine Oeconomy, being sure, whether it be soon no, it is most just even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the Divine Mercy made publick in unexpected instances at the great day of Manifestation. And indeed our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely, and carelesly, without Prayers, without Sacraments, without consideration, without counsel, and without comfort: and to dress the Souls of our dear people at so sad a parting is an employment we therefore omit, not always because we are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allays the affections of the world with those melancholick circumstances; but if God did not in his mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for upon too easie terms, certainly the pains of the damped are infinitely too if God did not in his mercles make fecret and equivalent provisions for them, and take care of his redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a fad eternity, and without remedy weep together, and groan for ever. But God hath provided better things for them, that they without us, that is, without our affiltances, shall be made perfect.

SERMON XXVII.

PART III.

Here are very many more orders and Conjugations of Mercies: but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatnes, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a few more and them also without order: for that they do descend upon us we see and feel, but by what order of things or causes, is as undiscerned as the head of Nilm, or a fudden remembrance of a long-neglected and forgotten Proposition.

I. But

SER M.

r. But upon this account it is that good men have observed, that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living, and does so certainly minister to Religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world and the influences of Heaven, are taught to serve the ends of the spirit of God and the spirit of a man. I do not speak of the Miracles that God hath in the feveral periods of the world wrought for the establishing his Laws, and confirming his Promiles, and securing our Obedience; though that was all the way the over-flowings and miracles of Mercy as well as Power: but that which I consider is, that besides the extraordinary emanations of the Divine Power upon the first and most solemn occaflores of an Institution and the first beginnings of a Religion, (such as were the wonders God did in Agent and in the wilderness, preparatory to the sanction of that Law and the first Covenant) and the miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles for the founding and the building up the Religion of the Gospel and the new Covenant; God does also do things wonderful and miraculous for the promoting the ordinary and less folemn actions of our Piety, and to affilt and accompany them in a con-Stant and regular succession. It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that Manna should stink in 24 hours if gathered upon Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till 48 hours if gathered upon the Even of the Sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of years when placed in the Sanctuary by the ministery of the high Priest But so it was in the Jews Religion: and Manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much and it was little; as if Nature that it might ferve Religion had been taught some measures of infinity, which is every where and no where, filling all things and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one Omer, and doing the work of two ; like the crowns of Kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty Warriour, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant Prince. And not only is it thus in Nature, but in contingencies and acts depending upon the choice of men. For God having commanded the fons of Ifrael to go up to Jerufalem to worthip thrice every year, and to leave their porders to be guarded by women and children and fick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spiteful enemies yet God so disposed of their hearts and opporrunities, that they never entred the Land when the people were at their folemnity, until they defecrated their Rites, by doing at their Passover the greatest sin and treason in the world. Till at Easter they arucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders: but

when they had destroyed Religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the City at the feast of Easter, that the more might perish in the deluge of the Divine indiguation.

To this observation the Jews add, That in Jerusalem no man ever had a sail that came thither to worship; That at their solemn Festivals there was reception in the Town for all the inhabitants of the Land; concerning which although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person among all the tribes of Israel was ever a beggar, but all the variety of humane chances were over-ruled to the purposes of Providence, and Providence was measured by the ends of the Religion, and the Religion which promised them plenty performed the promise, till the Nation and Religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better Ministery and a more excellent dispensation of the things of

the world.

But when Christian Religion was planted, and had taken root, and had SERM. filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole Creation became fervant to the Kigdom of Grace; and the head of the Religion is also the XXVII. Head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of Grace: and now Angels are ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord; and all the violences of men and things of nature and choice are forced into Subjection and lowest ministeries, and to co-operate as with an united design to verific all the Promises of the Gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the Kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or Persecution, is made rich by Religion, and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things; and forrow it self is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to Vertue, but because it self is one, as in the case of Repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into Religion, and Religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation: Certain it is, that Angels of light and darkness, all the influences of Heaven and the fruits and productions of the Earth, the Stars and the Elements, the fecret things that lie in the bowels of the Sea and the Entrails of the Earth, the fingle Effects of all efficients and the conjunction of all causes, all events forefeen and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to Him whose greatest desire and great interest is by all means to save our Souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole Creation hall be made to bend in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to Religion, to the good of the Catholick Church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chuses.

2. But that which is next to this, and not much unlike the defign of this wonderful Mercy, is, that all the actions of Religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing, and sometimes of contradictory, relations, are so concentred in God their proper centre, and conducted in fuch certain and pure channels of reason and rule, that no one duty does contradict another 3, and it can never be necessary for any man in any case to sin. They that bound themselves by an Oath to kill Paul were not environed with the sad necessities of Murther on one side, and Vow-breach on the other, so that if they did murther him they were manflayers, if they did not they were perjured; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawful Oath should pass an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawful confederation against his Prince, is not girded with a fatal necessity of breach of trust on one side, or breach of Allegeance on the other; for in this also God hath secured the case of Conscience, by forbidding any man to make an unlawful Promise; and upon a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it in case he bath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it, during that doubt, because what sever is not of faith is fin. But yet God's mercy hath taken care to break this fnare in funder, so that he may neither sin against the Commandment, nor against his Conscience: for he is bound to lay aside his Errour, and be better instructed; till when, the scene of his fin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact. No man can ferve two masters, but therefore he must hate the one, and cleave to the other. But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in fin, and that the great Long-suffering of God is expressed

in this, that God Suffered the contradiction of sinners; we shall feel the Mercy of God in the Peace of our Consciences and the Unity of Religion, SER M. fo long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a Coverous man, XXVII. that he is the farther off from fulness by having great heaps and valt revenues; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it; and that the more he shall need to be satisfied, the less he shall dare to do it; and that he shall refuse to drink because he is dry; that he dies if he tastes, and languishes if he does not; and at the same time he is full and empty, buriting with a plethory and confumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oil and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian fands. But then the contradiction is multiplied, and the labyrinths more amazed, when Prodigality waits upon another curse, and Covetousness heaps up that Prodigality may scatter abroad, then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two Devils to serve of contradictory designs, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably than the Ægyptians taskmasters; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things, but they begin where they should end, and begin again; and never pass forth to content, or reason, or quietness, or possession. But the duty of a Christian is easie in a Persecution, it is clear under a Tyranny, it is evident in despite of Heresie, it is one in the midst of Schism, it is determined amongst infinite Disputes; being like a Rock in the Sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more. So is our duty, uniform and constant, open and notorious, variously represented, but in the same manner exacted: and in the interest of our Souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty, or the variety of any thing that can change; and it is by the grace and mercy of God put into the power of every Christian to do that which God through Jesus Christ will accept to Salvation: and neither men nor Devils shall hinder it, unless we list

our selves. 3. After all this, we may fit down and reckon up great sums and conjugations of his gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the Divine Mercies. God hath given his Laws to rule us, his Word to instruct us, his Spirit to guide us, his Angels to protect us, his Ministers to exhort us: he revealed all our duty, and he hath concealed whatsoever can hinder us; he hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming; he hath exercised our Faith by keeping private the state of Souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our Faith by a promise of a Resurrection, and entertained our Hope by some general significations of the state of interval. His Mercies make contemptible means instrumental to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases. He impedes the Devil's rage, and infatuates his counfels; he diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes; he binds him in the chain of darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; he fuffers him to walk in folitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a child; he hath given him mighty power, and yet a young maiden that relifts him shall make him flee away; he hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve Articles of his Creed; he gave him power over the winds, and made him Prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy Prayer can drive him as



far as the utmost sea; and he hath so restrained him, that (except it be by faith) we know not whether there be any Devil, yea or no: for we never heard his noises, nor have seen his affrighting shapes. This is that great Principle of all the Felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means. He hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary, and all mutual helpers; and by some instruments and in fome respects they are all equal in order to felicity, to content, and final and intermedial satisfactions. He gave as part of our reward in hand, that he might inable us to work for more he taught the world Arts for use, Arts for entertainment of all our Faculties and all our dispositions : he gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want for asking, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refuling to be happy. This is that glorious Attribute that hath made order and bealth, barmony and hope, restitutions and variety, the joys of direct possession, and the joys, the artificial joys of contrariety and comparison. He comforts the poor, and he brings down the rich, that they may be fafe, in their humility and forrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and uninstructed Prosperity. He gives necessaries to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so, that every Nation may traffick in charity, and commute for pleasures. He was the Lord of Hosts, and he is still what he was; but he loves to be called the God of Peace; because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His Mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of Heaven. His Mercy is the life of the Greation and it fills all the earth; and his Mercy is a Sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the Deep: it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our sears, and in all the evils that we suffer. His Mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel: for all the world in the abysse of the Divine Mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the Sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is valt, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burthen, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnifie this Mercy for ever and ever; that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all

And yet this is but the one half. The Mercies of giving I have now told of; but those of forgiving are greater, though not more. [Heis ready to forgive.] And upon this stock thrives the interest of our great hope, the hopes of a blessed Immortality. For if the mercies of giving have not made our expectation big enough to entertain the considences of Heaven: yet when we think of the graciousness and readiness of forgiving, we may with more readiness hope to escape Hell, and then we cannot but be blessed by an eternal consequence. We have but small opinion of the Divine Mercy, if we dare not believe concerning it, that it is desirous, and able, and watchful, and passionate, to keep us, or rescue us respectively from such a condemnation, the pain of which is insupportable, and the duration is eternal, and the extension is misery upon all our faculties, and the intension is great beyond patience, or natural or supernatural abilities, and the state is a state of darkness and despair, of consusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit and gnashing

of teeth, misery universal, perfect and irremediable. From this it is which God's Mercies would so fain preserve us. This is a state that God pro- SERM. vides for his enemies, not for them that love him; that endeavour to XXVII. obey, though they do it but in weakness; that weep truly for their sins, though but with a shower no bigger than the drops of pity; that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter than a poor man's candle, though their strengths are no greater than a contrite reed or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth than the smoak of kindling flax. If our Faith be pure, and our Love unfeigned, if the degrees of it be great, God will accept it into glory; if it be little, he will accept it into grace and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of God's readiness to forgive: he will upon any terms that are not unreasonable, and that do not suppose a remanent affection to fin, keep us from the intolerable pains of Hell. And indeed if we confider the constitution of the conditions which God requires, we shall soon perceive God intends Heaven to us a meer gift, and that the duties on our parts are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections and our love, that the Devil might not seize upon that portion which to eternal ages shall be the instrument of our Happiness. For in all the parts of our duty, it may be there is but one instance in which we are to do violence to our natural and first desires. For those men have very ill natures, to whom Vertue is so contrary that they are inclined naturally to Luft, to Drunkenness and Anger, to Pride and Covetousness, to Unthank fulness and Disobedience. Most men that are tempted with Lust could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels as of Temperance, and Justice, or Religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of Lust; and persons that are greedy of Money are not fond of Amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the Wine: and one Vice destroys another: and when one Vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment and dereliction of the man, unless where Vices have cognation, and seem but like several degrees of one another. And it is evil custom and superinduced habits that make artificial appetites in most men to most sins: But many times their natural temper vexes them into uneafie disposititions, and aptnesses only to some one unhandsome fort of action. That one thing therefore is it in which God demands of thee mortification and self-denial.

Certain it is, there are very many men in the world that would fain commute their severity in all other instances for a license in their one appetite; they would not refuse long Prayers after a drunken meeting, or great Alms together with one great Lust. But then consider how easie it is for them to go to Heaven. God demands of them, for his fake and their own, to crucifie but one natural Lust, or one evil habit, (for all the rest they are easie enough to do themselves) and God will give them Heaven, where the joy is more than one. And I said it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any less evil to which the temptation is trifling should interpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy: and our little and inferiour appetites, that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences than by direct violence, must not dwell with him who hath croffed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance. Since therefore this is the state of most men, and God in effect

demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that will give them SERM. all good things; it gives demonstration of his huge easiness to redeem us from that intolerable evil that is equally consequent to the indulging to

one or to twenty finful habits.

2. God's readiness to pardon appears in this, that he pardons before we ask; for he that bids us ask for pardon, hath in delign and purpose done the thing already: for, What is wanting on his part, in whose only power it is to give pardon, and in whose desire it is that we should be pardoned, and who commands us to lay hold upon the offer? He hath done all that belongs to God, that is, all that concerns the Pardon; there it lies ready, it is recorded in the book of life, it wants nothing but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consign and pass the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to Devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair

3. Nay, God is so ready in his Mercy, that he did pardon us even before he redeemed us. For, What is the secret of the mysterie, that the eternal Son of God should take upon him our nature, and die onr death, and fuffer for our fins, and do our work, and enable us to do our own? He that did this, is God; he who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, he came to satisfie himself, to pay to himself the price for his own creature. And when he did this for us that he might pardon us, was he at that instant angry with us? was this an effect of his anger or of his love, that God sent his Son to work our Pardon and Salvation? Indeed we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life; but he was reconciled to us fo far, as that he then did the greatest thing in the world for us: For nothing could be greater than that God, the Son of God, should die Here was reconciliation before pardon: and God, that came to die for us, did love us first before he came. This was hasty love.

But it went farther yet.

4. God pardoned us before we finned; and when he forefaw our fin, even mine and yours, he fent his Son to die for us: our Pardon was wrought and effected by Christ's death above 1600 years ago; and for the fins of to morrow, and the infirmities of the next day, Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead, and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not only a favour to us who were born in the due time of the Gospel, but to all mankind since Adam: For God, who is infinitely patient in his Justice, was not at all patient in his Mercy; he for-bears to strike and punish us, but he would not forbear to provide cure for us and remedy. For, as if God could not stay from redeeming us, he promised the Redeemer to Adam in the beginning of the world's sin; and Christ was the Lamb stain from the beginning of the world; and the Covenant of the Gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to his part, as to the ministration of Pardon; the feed of the woman was fet up against the Dragon as soon as ever the Tempter had won his first battel: and though Cod laid his hand and drew a veil of types and secrecy before the manifestation of his Mercies; yet he did the work of Redemption, and faved us by the Covenant of Faith, and the Righteousness of Believing, and the mercies of Repentance, the graces of Pardon, and the blood of the slain Lamb, even from the Fall of Adam to this very day, and will do till Christ's second Coming.

Adam fell by his folly, and did not perform the Covenant of one little work, a work of a fingle abstinence; but he was restored by Faith in

And by Faith Enoch was translated, and by Faith a remnant was saved at the SER M. Flood: and to Abraham, this was imputed for Righteonsness, and to all the Patriarchs, and to all the righteous Judges, and holy Prophets, and Saints of the Old Testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their Covenant were expressed) to the Law of works: their Pardon was sealed and kept within the vail within the curtains of the Sanctuary; and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since. And this was a great excellency of the Divine Mercy unto them. God had mercy on all mankind before Christ's manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their Covenant; and they were saved as we are, by the seed of the world: not by Works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact Obedience; but by Faith working by Love, by sincere, hearty endeavours, and believing God, and relying upon his infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy, Jesu Christ. So that here is pardon before we asked it, Pardon before Christ's coming, Pardon before Redemption, and pardon before we sinned. What greater readiness to forgive us can be imagined? Yes, there is one degree more yet; and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5. For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more Pardon: he pardons us by turning every one of us away from our iniquities. That's the purpose of Christ; that he might safely pardon us before we finned, and we might not fin upon the confidence of Pardon. He pardoned us not only upon condition we would fin no more, but he took away our fin, cured our cursed inclinations, instructed our Understanding, rectified our Will, fortified us against Temptation; and now every man whom he pardons he also sanctifies, and he is born of God, and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains with him, so long as his Pardon continues. This is the consummation of Pardon. For if God had so pardoned us, as only to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a Redeemer for every month, and new pardons perpetually. But our Bleffed Redeemer hath taken away our fin, not only the guilt of our old, but our inclinations to new fins: he makes us like himself; and commands us to live so, that we shall not need a second Pardon, that is, a second state of Pardon: for we are but once baptized into Christ's Death, and that death was but one, and our Redemption but one, and our Covenant thesame; and as long as we continue within the Covenant, we are still within the power and comprehentions of the first Pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of Pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our Covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the Spirit; yet we resist him, and we grieve him, and we go off from the holiness of the Covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great Pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed: and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the Holy Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith and Pardon, sits in Heaven in a perpetual advocation for us, that this pardon once wrought may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumor of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and upon every

true and fincere return of a hearty Repentance. And now upon this title SERM. no more degrees can be added: it is already greater, and was before all our needs, than the old covenant, and beyond the Revelations, and did in Adam's youth antidate the Gospel, turning the publick miseries by secret grace into eternal glories. But now upon other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and fwells like an hydropick cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosome of Heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showrs, to water and refresh the

> 7. God is so ready to forgive, that himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must in some degree pardon us before we are capable of Pardon, by his grace making way for his mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unless God by his preventing grace should first work the first part of our Pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, we could not desire a Pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it. This giving of preventing grace is a mercy of Forgiveness, contrary to that severity by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sence; that is a leaving of men to themselves, so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so plenteously, and the son of God purchased so dearly for us. When God fends a plague of War upon a land, in all the accounts of Religion and expectations of reason, the way to obtain our Peace is, to leave our fins for which the War was sent upon us, as the messenger of wrath: and without this, we are like to perish in the judgment. But then consider what a sad condition we are in : War mends but few, but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine, and authorizes murther; and these crimes must be ministered to by their lesser relatives, by coverousness, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder liberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, fuch cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the fin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed; How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sickness, and our Antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of God's preventing grace; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to aftertain us we shall have it: But unless God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, we see there is no help in us nor for us. If we be not smitten, we are undone; if we are smitten, we perish: And, as young Demarchus said of his Love, when he we was made master of his wish, Salvus sum, quia pereo; si non peream, plane inteream; we may say of some of God's judgements, We perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten; and if they be, then we are worse undone: because we grow worfe for being milerable; but we can be relieved only by a free mercy. For Pardon is the way to pardon: and when God gives us our penny then we can work for another; and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that we can do towards it, is but to take it in God's method. And this must needs be a great forwardness of Forgiveness, when God's mercy gives the Pardon, and the way to find it, and the hand to receive it, and the eye to fearch it, and the heart to defire it; being busie and effective as Elijah's fire, which, intending to convert the facrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances, stood in the neighbourhood of the fuel, and called forth its enemies, and

licked up the hindring moisture, and the water of the trenches, and c made the Altar send forth a phantastick smoke before the Sacrifice was SER M. enkindled. So is the preventing grace of God: it does all the work of XXVII. our Souls, and makes its own way, and invites it felf, and prepares its own lodging, and makes its own entertainment; it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our defires; it provokes us to pray, and fanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the delire valid, and the defire does make the act certain and persevering; and both of them are the works of God. For more is received into the Soul from without the foul, than does proceed from within the foul: It is more for the foul to be moved and disposed, than to work when that is done: as the passage from death to life is greater than from life to action, especially fince the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of God's forwardness and readiness to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient, but God's own words describing Mercy in all those dimensions which can figuifie to us its greatness and infinity. His Mercy is great, his mercies are many, his mercy reacheth unto the heavens, it fills heaven and earth, it is above all his works, it endureth for ever. God pitieth was a father doth his children; nay, he is our Father, and the same also is the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; so that Mercy and We have the same relation: and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man only God shews the Mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away his Mercy, manshall be no more; no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition or his person. But as God preserves man by his mercy, so his Mercy hath all its operations upon man, and returns to its own centre and incircumscription and infinity, unless it issues forth upon us. And therefore besides the former great lines of the Mercy of Forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce, and tell its links, is to open a cabinet of Jewels, where every Stone is as bright as a Star, and every Star is great as the Sun, and thines for ever, unless we that our eyes, or draw the veil of obstinate and final lins.

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before he be angry; and yet God is provoked every day, by the Obstinacy of the Jews, and the Folly of the Heathens, and the Rudeness and Infidelity of the Mahametans, and the Negligence and Vices of Christians: and he that can behold no impurity, is received in all places with perfumes of multitoms, and garments spotted with the flesh, and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil Confcience, and with accurled lins that he hates, upon pretence of Religion which he loves; and he is made a party against himself by our voluntary mistakes; and men continue ten years, and 20, and 30, and 50; in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God for bears to kill them, and to consign them over to an evernity of horrid pains, still expecting they should repent and be faved.

2. Belides this Long-fufferance and forbearing with an unwearied parience, God also excuses a finner offentimes, and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move him to intermedial favours first, and from thence to a final pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with an huge eatines to pardon, if he be entreated and reconciled by the ef-

fective Repentance of a vigorous manhood. He takes Ignorance for an SERM. excuse; and in every degree of its being inevitable or innocent in its XXVII. proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. But I found mercy of the Lord, because I did it in ignorance, saith S. Paul. He pities our infirmities, and strikes off much of the account upon that stock: the violence of a Temptation and restlesness of its motion, the perpetuity of its sollicitation, the weariness of a man's spirit, the state of Sickness, the necessity offecular affairs, the publick cultoms of a people, have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards some degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives himself forced to strike, yet then he takes off his hand, and repents him of the evil: It is as if it were against him, that any of his creatures should fall under the strokes of an exterminat-

ing fury

When he is forced to proceed, he yet makes an end before he hath half done: and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to strike less, as if he himself had the deliverance, and not we. When Abab had but humbled himself at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the message to the Prophet himself, saying, Seeft thou not how Ahab humbles himself? What was the event of it? I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his fons days the evil shall come upon his House.

5. God forgets our fin, and puts it out of his remembrance; that is, he makes it as though it had never been, he makes Penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory: the memory of the fins shall not be upon record, to be used to any after-act of disadvantage; and never shall return, unless we force them out of their secret places by

ingratitude and a new state of sinning.

6. God sometimes gives a Pardon beyond all his revelations and declared will, and provides suppletories of Repentances, even then when he cuts a man off from the time of Repentance, accepting a temporal death in flead of an eternal; that although the Divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in some cases, and to some perfons, the death and the very cutting off shall go no farther, but be in stead of explicite and long Repentances. Thus it happened to Uzzah, who was smitten for his zeal, and died in severity for prevaricating the letter, by earnestness of spirit to serve the whole Religion. Thus it was also in the case of the Corinthians, that died a temporal death for their undecent circumstances in receiving the holy Sacrament: Saint Paul who used it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no farther, nor pressed the argument to a sadder issue, than to die temporally.

But these suppletories are but seldom, and they are also great troubles, and ever without comfort, and dispensed irregularly, and that not in the case of habitual sins, that we know of, or very great sins, but in single actions, or instances of a less malignity; and they are not to be relied upon, because there is no rule concerning them : but when they do happen, they magnifie the infiniteness of God's mercy, which is commenfurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of

his own revelations.

7. God pardons the greatest sinners, and hath left them upon record: and there is no instance in the Scripture of the Divine Forgiveness,

but in fuch instances, the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak com aloud the glories of God's mercies, and gentleness, and readiness to for- SER M. give. Such were, S. Paul a persecutor, and S. Peter that for wore his Master, Mary Magdalene with seven Devils, the Thief upon the Cross, Manasses an Idolater, David a Murtherer and Adulterer, the Corinthian for Incest, the Children of Ifrael for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and Insidelity, and Rebellion, and Schism, and a Golden calf, and open Disobedience: And above all, I shall instance and a Golden call, and open Dilobedience: And above all, I mail intrance in the Pharifees among the Jews, who had finned against the Holy Ghost, as our Blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, viz. in saying that the Spirit of God by which Christ did work, was an evil spirit; and afterward they crucified Christ; so that two of the Persons of the most holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off: yet, forty years time (after all this) was lest for their Repentance, and they were called upon by arguments more perswasive and more excellent, in that 40 years, than all the Nation had heard from their Prophets, even from Samuel to Zacharias. And 70nas thought he had reason on his side to refuse to go to threaten Nineve; he knew Gods tenderness in destroying his creatures, and that he should be thought to be but a false Prophet; and so it came to pass according to Jonah prayed unto the Lord and Said, I pray thee, Lord, was not Jonah 4. 2? this my saying when I was yet in my countrey? Therefore I fled; for I knew thou wert a gracious God and merciful, flow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. He told before-hand what the event would be, and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Ifrael, and made it to be his name: Miserator & misericors Deus; the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gratious, &c.
You see the largeness of this treasure; But we can see no end, for

we have not yet looked upon the rare arts of Conversion; nor that God leaves the natural habit of Vertues, even after the acceptation is interrupted; nor his working extraregular Miracles, belides the sufficiency of Moses and the Prophets and the New Testament; and thousands more,

which we cannot confider now.

But this we can: When God fent an Angel to pour plagues upon the earth, there were in their hands Phiale auree, golden Phials: for the death of men is precious and coftly, and it is an expence that God delights not in: but they were Phials, that is, fuch veffels as out of them no great evil could come at once; but it comes out with difficulty, fobbing and troubled as it passes forth; it comes through a narrow neck, and the parts of it croud at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each others neighbourhood, and all strive to get out, but few can pass; as if God did nothing but threaten, and draw his judgments to the mouth of the Phial,

with a full body, and there made it stop it self.

The result of this consideration is, That as we fear the Divine Judgements, so that we adore and love his Goodness, and let the golden chains of the Divine Mercy tye us to a noble profecution of our duty and the interest of Religion. For he is the worst of men whom Kindness cannot soften, nor endearment oblige, whom gratitude cannot tye faster than the bands of life and death. He is an ill natur'd finner, if he will not comply with the sweetnesses of Heaven, and be civil to his Angelguardian, or observant of his Patron God, who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly than a Nurse, more diligently than a

Exod. 36. 4:

Client, who hath greater care of him than his father, and whose bowels SER M. yearn over him with more compassion than a Mother; who is bountiful XXVII. beyond our need, and merciful beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. Fear is stronger than Death, and Love is more prevalent than Fear, and Kindness is the greatest endearment of Love; and yet to an ingenuous person Gratitude is greater than all these, and obliges to a solemn duty, when Love fails, and Fear is dull and unactive, and Death it self is despised. But the man who is hardned against Kindness, and whose duty is not made alive with Gratitude, must be used like a flave, and driven like an Ox, and inticed with goads and whips; but must never enter into the inheritance of Sons. Let us take heed; for Mercy is like a Rainbow, which God set in the clouds to remember mankind: it shines here as long as it is not hindred; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it thines not in the other world. If we refuse Mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.

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